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# EXPLORING AND ANALYZING A RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AN INFLUENTIAL SPORTING EVENT

## CASE: WORLD MASTERS ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIP – JYVÄSKYLÄ, FINLAND

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Abstract

Event planning was always considered a risky business, but nowadays managers in Australia and the UK developed an internationally applicable strategy towards minimizing uncertainties and threats. The purpose of this thesis was to find out how the internationally developed event risk management framework is practiced in Finland or if practiced at all.

Qualitative research method was used in this research. In order to study the research problem, case study of World Masters Athletics (WMA) Championship 2012 in Jyväskylä was chosen. Experiences of four members of the local organizing committee were collected through semi-structured in-person interviews and were later analyzed together with the event plans.

The results of this research revealed that the risk management framework has not been optimized by Finnish event management practitioners yet, basically due to the unawareness of the concept in general. Nevertheless, WMA 2012 event organizers possess the ability to anticipate risks and prevent undesirable outcomes in designing event, marketing, finance, safety and security and environmental management. In addition, several development ideas were proposed to the hypothetic future event planners how to address event risks in Finland.

Keywords
Risk management, event management, sporting events

Miscellaneous

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Rationale

Just as any project planning process event production involves a tremendous amount of uncertainties in various areas and stages of planning: unpredictable weather conditions, equipment failure, sponsorship withdraw, emergency cases, artists' illnesses and etc. Bowdin (2011, 4) fairly pointed out that there is no event without risks. Event industry is a fast growing business which can easily influence other areas. Risk, as one of the components of event planning and handling, can not only destroy normal progress of an event, but also cause harm to prospective economic benefits and social benefits of a whole community at the same time. Image of the community in many ways can be created or destroyed within success (or lack of it) of events organized in this community or by this community. In addition, sometimes risks contained in big sporting events or influential entertainment events even bring danger to the political image of the host country. Therefore "success" has to be managed by analyzing pitfall areas and boundaries beforehand and mitigating or avoiding them.

The concept of event risk management was developed about 20 years ago and recently it has been sufficiently studied and implemented only in North America, Australia and Western Europe (in the UK, the Netherlands). However the idea of raising profile of events has already spread to the northern countries and even further to the East.

The author's personal interest on this topic was raised in early 2011 when she was completing her exchange studies in Birmingham, UK. Risk management in event industry was discussed throughout the whole course with practitioners – professional event organizers. Later, while completing an internship in the event & conference management department in the IBC Company, Moscow the author was eager to experience how the concept was implemented in the Russian environment. Yet, gained knowledge appeared to be worthless: the most challenging part of the work was post-elimination of adverse consequences due to the fact that the company did not follow any framework which would allow performing in a rather

proactive way than reactive. Lack of preventive actions could easily lead to poor performance and customer dissatisfaction. Therefore the author was induced to create own algorithm. The researcher observed that in Russia the concept was not studied in any context, was not introduced to the practitioners and is not supported by the law. However some efforts over risk mitigation still took place. Generally those emerged from previous challenging experience of the event organizers when lack of risk assessment and mitigation plans created disastrous situations. A review of the situation in Russian event planning environment revealed that approach taken by the managers towards risk management differs from country to country: in the UK it is a well-known part of the event planning strategy, in Russia the risk management concept is nowhere to be seen, even in literature. Thus, the author anticipated the need for a study which would explore how the risk management framework is practiced (if practiced at all) in the country under investigation and provide a development advice if needed.

After the author had returned to Finland to complete her remaining studies, she received a chance to participate in the World Masters Athletics championship in Jyväskylä as a volunteer which played an important role in initiating of this research. The author became interested in how the situation is managed in Finland.

## 1.2. Research objective

This research aims to answer the following question:

- How do event organizers perform risk management in the planning process of a big sporting event in Finland such as the World Masters Athletics indoor Championship 2012?

In order to support the main research question the following sub-questions were formulated:

- What risks were identified in particular areas of the study and how they were managed?
- To what degree risk management is practiced and how does the current approach correspond to the developed risk management framework?

In order to answer the research question the author chose World Masters Athletics (WMA) Indoor championship event to serve as an exploratory case study. Nonetheless the author does not fully claim this case to represent a universal framework of risk management practice in Finland. Rather it attempts to shed the light on the subject in relation to Finnish event management. Research design and method will be deeper discussed in the methodology chapter of this thesis.

The objective of this study is to investigate how the concept of event risk management is integrated in Finland into the planning process based on empirical studies of a concrete influential event. The research aims to analyze risks of several areas of event planning: program design, marketing, finance, security and environmental issues as the author regards deep analysis of the whole planning process as an unfeasible decision. These concrete areas were chosen as they are highlighted by several authors in literature (Tarlow, 2002; Silvers, 2004, 2008; Bowdin, 2011).

In the following chapter the author provides the literature review and discusses risk management concept in the context of event management. Chapter number three investigates practical implications of it in several different areas. The methodology chapter covers the research strategy of this study. Chapter number five embraces empirical research results, analysis and recommendations. The conclusion summarizes the most important analytical results and furnishes the reader with a logical inference.

# 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1. Risk management concept

The general concept of risk management was developed by the institute of risk management and it can be interpreted as a process of analyzing, evaluating and assessing a situation “with a view to increasing the probability of [their] success and reducing the likelihood of failure” (The Institute of Risk management, 2012).

Agrawal (2009, 1-5, 7-9) describes risk management as a practice of determination and control of the threats which can be characterized with highly negative impact probability for the organization or its resources. It also covers analysis of operations of the organization, eduction of potential hazardous situations and decision-making process on taking appropriate actions. The author mentions that traditionally risk management was associated with insurance management. However, if procurement of insurance can be seen as a rather passive approach of managing threats, risk management speaks for itself and encourages active and even proactive behavior. Vesper (2006) agrees with Agrawal (2009) and also adds that most of risk management practices refer to the financial situation analysis, and moreover the early concept evolved from attempts to control profitability and loss of the business.

In the event management industry risk management is considered as a highly prioritized activity (Silvers, 2008, 3-4). The event management body of knowledge (EMBOK) recognizes risk management as one of the knowledge domains of event management; its philosophy considers it more as a ‘core competence’ than practice or function. However it is also noticed by EMBOK researchers state that this competence has not been studied in depth and most event production processes miss valuable risk assessment procedures (EMBOK,2004). Silvers (2008, 3) argues that risk management is usually employed as a tool for the post evaluation of the event, but not as a continuous process. Furthermore, Bowdin (2011) notices that risk management was earlier considered as an informal tool, however nowadays the percentage of event planners which formalize and document the process has increased, especially in the UK and Australia.

Today most of the theorists (Allen, 2008; Tarlow, 2002, etc.) of event management studies do not develop a new view on the concept from the entertainment industry perspective of the entertainment, but successfully apply the ISO standard definition:

> *"Risk management refers to a coordinated set of activities and methods that is used to direct an organization and to control the many risks that can affect its ability to achieve objectives."*
> (ISO 31000 2009 plain English risk management dictionary, 2009)

Most of these definitions regard risk management processes as activities focused on responding to negative environmental issues and hazards. Yet the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) emphasizes Bowdin's (2011, 600-601) claim that project risk management deals with both negative and positive prospective happenings. This is an encouragement regarding risk management not only as a technique to avoid adverse situations, but also as an approach towards adding value to the event. In this sense Perminova (2009, 171-174) went further in her research about project uncertainties and expressed an opinion that risk management together with opportunity management are both components of the uncertainty management concept. Silvers (2008, 3-4), on the other hand, argued that the view on risk management in event studies cannot be monosemantic because the nature of risks can vary. Comparing to other project management fields, the event industry's risk management is event dependent and may include alternatives in methodology due to the immaturity of this concept in relation to event management.

## 2.2. Risk management approach

As mentioned earlier the risk management concept basically applies to all industries; therefore the suggested framework claims to be useful for event production. However EMBOK headed by Silvers (2004) developed a 'holistic framework' which due to its thoroughly structured nature explains the process in the best possible way so far.

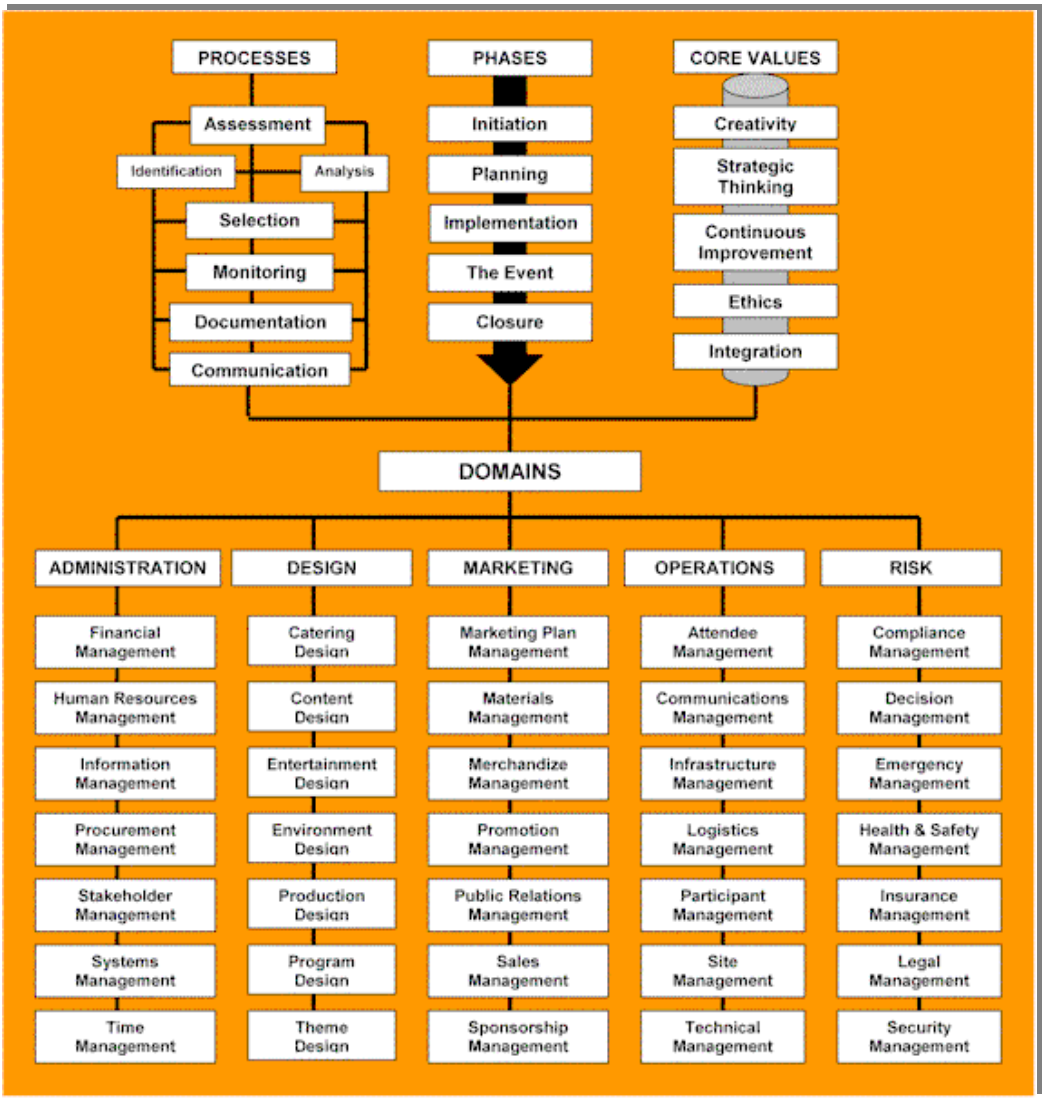


**Figure 1. Risk management framework developed by EMBOK (Silvers, 2004)**

Figure 1 shows how the framework synchronizes event production processes (from idea development to post evaluation phase), risk management process (which was slightly enhanced to correspond to event industry needs) and core values (which guide decision-making process). Integration of those, in its turn, influences 5 knowledge domains of administration, design, marketing, operations and risk which

represent event planner's activities and responsibilities in a logical way. The benefit of utilizing this framework for event production lies in the fact that it embraces every single area of event organizing that the professionals should concentrate on and provides a perfect tool for gap analysis of the ongoing processes of event planning and implementation.

## 2.3. Steps of risk management framework

Approach developed by EMBOK (Silvers, 2004) is expressed in 5 steps:

- *Assessment:* it is based on identification of areas of potential hazards and risks. Then risks are categorized (using different variables) and evaluated to detect possible impacts, likelihood of happening and other characteristics vital for further decision-making.
- *Selection:* on this stage the event planner decides on further possible actions – chooses response methods. He also determines resources, time framework, responsibilities and progress reporting system.
- *Monitoring:* ongoing control over the chosen method of response requires full attention of the event executive, further evaluation of efficiency (there is a need to develop assessment framework) can uncover a need for an alternative plan.
- *Documentation:* decisions made, risks identified, methods chosen, alternative plans, assessment criteria have to be recorded, reported on time and saved for future situations as benchmarks.
- *Communication:* Event executive has to facilitate the information flow in order to ensure that risks and response methods are communicated to the various right stakeholders on time. Of course, open communication helps to identify potential gaps and encourages consultation with experts for faster troubleshooting practices.

It is suggested that this approach has to follow each step of the event production (idea definition, planning, etc.) as risks evolve on any stage due to the dynamic nature of the environment. EMBOK's framework is applied as a sphere of actions than step-by-step plan because, for example, communication stage obtains dual meaning: after all earlier steps are fulfilled, an event planner needs to communicate

resulting messages to the relevant stakeholders and at the same time communication facilitates risk management processes.

Most of event management theorists and practitioners ( e.g. Tarlow,2002; Sonder, 2004; Allen,2005; Bowdin, 2011; Shone,2006) orient their risk management process models around a similar framework. Sonder (2004, 218) points out that this framework basically existed and was practiced for many years before EMBOK simply restructured and fine-tuned the knowledge for optimal use. But yet there is a minor cleavage in regard to views: for example, Allen et al. (2008, 591) referenced O'Toole's risk management algorithm which starts from identifying risks from contextual environment analysis rather than functional areas. This approach discovers deeper understandings of a particular event strategy. Bowdin (2011, 604) refers to the 'nine step' risk project management model from HSE guide (2006) which shapes identification of the impacts of the potential risks into a separate step: in some cases impacts can overlap and multiply therefore analysis of the potential impacts can prevent disastrous situations. Goldblatt (1997, 285-288) shares Berlonghi's (1991) view on risk management: he suggests to organize 'a risk assessment meeting' as a first step and employ a brainstorming strategy to identify all the potential hazards and choose appropriate actions, conduct 'a safety meeting' as a second stage to communicate findings to all influential stakeholders, engage a walk-through inspection to ensure that the situation is under control, and then document activities, assessment and preventive steps. Although this approach seems to create a more detailed action plan, it does not emphasize on which areas the event executive has to concentrate on in order to cover all potential risks. In addition, this method considers only threats to the safety of the event. Tarlow (2002, 34) discusses that the whole risk management process can be described using Gemba Kaizen principle created in Japan for optimizing enormous information flow and focusing on important things: 1. Select a product 2. Understand the current situation 3. Analyze data to identify root causes 4. Establish countermeasures 5. Implement the countermeasures 6. Confirm the effect 7. Standardize 8.Review.

### 2.3.1. Risk assessment

Event planning and management requires a tremendous amount of time and resources. Strategy determination, goal setting, contracting suppliers, choosing vendors and services, creating program design, marketing and looking for sponsorship and many more are the areas event executives focus on, and their key responsibility is to lead the planning and implementation activities with a constant pursuit of potential risks. The risk assessment phase is considered to be the most vital procedure in event planning as it uncovers uncertainty and interprets it into the knowledge which is a key element for decision-making. However practitioners sometimes neglect it due to the common misconceptions that risk assessment is only important for large-scale events. This aspect owes to the fact that risk management skills are needed and the budget is too tight to hire a specialist (North East England: festivals and events toolkit, 2012). Moreover, event planners, especially inexperienced ones, do not realize where to commence.

#### 2.3.1.1. Risk identification

Silvers (2008, 4) defines risk as "a possibility that something good or something bad might happen" which will influence particular areas of event production. Negative or positive outcomes forecasting is determined from the nature of risk – speculative or absolute. Speculative risks contain a possibility of both, whilst absolute risks cause only losses. Other researchers view risk only in a negative context (Bowdin, 2011; Goldblatt, 1997; Shone, 2006; Allen, 2008; Masterman, 2009; Nikson, 2006). Nevertheless, risk evolves from uncertainty in comparison to which it is concrete and measurable, and from a philosophical point of view it positively stimulates the change (Perminova, 2009, 49-50).

Difficultness of risk identification processes can be explained with vast focus areas and the requirement of specific knowledge. The successful and proactive detection of hazards demands previous experiences, developed knowledge and skills (Allen et al., 2008, 593), understanding of the context – understanding of the environment of the event, stakeholders, impacts – clear intentions and goals. (Perminova, 2009, 41-46)

Risk can emerge anywhere therefore different techniques were introduced to identify risks and areas where they hold a possibility to emerge. For instance, the simplest way is to address the environment is with W + 1H model (Changing minds: "5W1H" article, 2012) stating the following questions: *what can be harmed, who are the stakeholders, in which way and how they can be harmed, why it is important and etc.* However managers cannot fully rely on this approach due to the limited nature of their knowledge (Nickson, 2006, 76). Thus, only known areas are examined with these questions. Tarlow (2002, 37) agreed that finding the right questions is a challenge, however he also noticed that there is no 'magic formula' and that risk management managers needs to use their skills and experience to generate and list their assumptions. Indeed, the event management business can be recognized by its challenging unique activity. The word 'unique' is a key feature which gives a hint that all activities planned and decisions made by event managers are of unique nature and explains the complexity of developing standardized frameworks and action plans. Nevertheless Tarlow (2002, 35-37) captures several recommended techniques in the research: direct observation, data collection from past event, personal intuition. Silvers (2008, 30), Shone (2006, 169) emphasize that asking/interviewing internal (staff, other managers) and external (experts, suppliers, and attendants) brings great value to the risk identification process as well as brainstorming meetings (Goldblatt, 1997, 289). Bowdin ( 2011, 600-602) suggests to use analytical tools from project management and other research fields:

- Work breakdown structure. It implies literal division of the event into a functional component which makes it easier to manage every of those and assign responsibilities (Shone, 2006, 166).
- Test events. Numerous mega-scale events use small-scale events as a rehearsal to the main event. For example, Sochi Olympic Commission launched test event program in 2011 in order to evaluate their management system, check the venue and emergency plans in action (Sochi 2014, test events).
- SWOT. SWOT analysis of the external and internal environment identifies strength and weaknesses of the planning and provides overview of the possible threats and favorable conditions.

- Fault diagram. Reverse analysis – from result to cause – supplies managers with a benchmark of which unfavorable actions and decisions should be avoided.
- Incident report. Incident reports measure certain types of incidents probability and equip event planners with appropriate figures of possible future risk situations.
- Contingency plan. Contingency plans are usually developed based on legal requirements of safety and security, therefore ideas on potential risks can be referenced from those plans (e.g. fire safety, crowd safety, emergency accidents, etc.).
- Scenario development. In contrast to contingency plan scenario planning overviews not only one uncertainty (for example, fire safety) but provides a forecast on how multiple uncertainties might change the environment. Scenarios are used to prevent under planning and focusing on the wrong issues (Shoemaker, 1995, 27).
- Consultation. Supplier possesses valuable knowledge for creating contingency plans. For example, venue provider might give advice on how to allocate services or perform signage of the place in order to avoid adverse situations.

In addition Silvers (2008, 36-37) reviews several more techniques:

- Documentation review. Past records of similar events can evidence some accidents and indicate areas manager should give consideration.
- Gap analysis. Gap analysis defines missing elements between expected results and actual performance, comparative studies of both reveals risk situations.
- Hazard mapping. This tool determines health and safety threats and relies mostly on the staff's knowledge and experience which can be obtained through surveys and reports.

Mixture of mentioned techniques allows for the covering event planning and production risks in detail. However, the majority of tools gives an overview only of the health and safety risks and besides, requires an assortment of recorded experiences of previous similar events. HSE guide (2011) proposes not to

"overcomplicate the process" and try to utilize risk assessment checklists at every step of event production.

#### 2.3.1.2. Risk environment

Tools and models support the identification phase and assist in locating thousands of hazards. However, without a systematic approach, they seem impractical. Categorizing risk issues serves best to avoid gaps, recognize intrinsic links between various risks, find root causes and possible impacts (Morgan et al., 2000, 49-50). Leopkey and Parent (2009) in their article investigated that many researchers tried to categorize event risks: e.g. Chang & Singh (1990), Getz (2005), Chappelet (2001), Peterson and Hronek (2003), Frodick and Walley(1997) grouped risks based on functional areas, operations, environmental factors or involved resources and stakeholders, others e.g. Appenzeller (2005), Bjarnason and Cannell (1999) outlined the most risky areas based on their personal views.

| Author | Risk issues/areas/topics |
|---|---|
| Chang and Singh (1990) | People (e.g., employees, athletes, volunteers)<br>Public (e.g., spectators, local community)<br>Property (e.g., equipment, facilities)<br>Financial/legal risk<br>Safety and security (e.g., physical hazards)<br>Television revenue risk (i.e., loss of revenue)<br>Political (e.g., international terrorism, threats, demonstrations) |
| Getz (2005) | Financial risk (e.g., loss of revenue, theft, legal issues, unanticipated costs)<br>Management risk (e.g., goal displacement, takeovers, management failures)<br>Health and safety hazards (e.g., accidents, medical issues, threats, emergencies)<br>Environmental risk (e.g., pollution, natural disasters) |
| Frosdick and Walley (1997) | Spectator/Crowd risks (e.g., poor seating, ticketing issues)<br>Commercial-related risk (e.g., to advertisers and sponsors)<br>External disruption risk (e.g., noise and projectiles from event)<br>Safety and security risk (e.g., venue condition) |
| Bjarnason and Cannell (1999) | Workers, proper documentation, good communication practices, valid insurance, secure facilities, equipment, emergency medical services, action plans |
| Chappelet (2001) | Corporal risk (e.g., related to quality and density of people)<br>Material risk<br>Environmental risk<br>Fraud risk<br>Meteorological risk<br>Image/public relations risk |
| Peterson and Hronek (2003) | Nature<br>Human incidences (e.g., crime, vandalism, hooliganism, terrorism) |
| Appenzeller (2005) | Ticket sales, sponsor services, athlete services, hospitality, operations, confessions, support services, advertising, promotions, media relations |

**Figure 2. Risk factors. (Leopkey and Parent, 2009)**

The variety of categories reflects difficulty of defining certain criteria's, though a definite logic can be traced: risk factors emerge from several environments and aim to harm objects exposed to risk. In event management the potential harm can be caused to people, property, finances, environment and image (or reputation) (Silvers, 2008, 40, 47). People can be either injured or their rights may be violated, property can be lost, stolen or damaged, finances can be lost (asset, sponsorship, revenue loss, etc.), reputation can be lost (for example, drug cheating on sport events) or misrepresented. In general risks can either "harm" or cause "detriment". "Harm" naturally refers to physical injuries or damage: sportsmen can get hurt during the competition; e.g. javelin, hammer or other equipment can injure audience; crowd crushes and etc. "Detriment" means loss (and not only physical): management team may establish poor communication and cause gaps in planning, bad publicity results, management might miss time deadlines and etc (Online learning for sports management, 2012).

Risk environments do not represent risk areas themselves, however they contain sources of risks. For example, Tchankova (2002) in the article "Risk identification – basic stage in risk management" mentioned seven environments: physical, social, political, operational, economic, cognitive and legal. Physical environment refers to nature condition: for example, the weather might be inconvenient or dangerous for outdoor activities. Social environment relates to people, their values and behavior. Stakeholders of an event are the biggest sources of risk: e.g. fraud, insufficient staff might be hired, staff can lack skills, referees might get sick, managers may not perform their responsibilities effectively etc (Nickson, 2006, 81-82). Political environment is especially important to analyze for large-scale international events: such events are exposed to terrorist attacks. Operation environment includes various organizational activities such as planning, installation, implementation of the event. Figure 1 shows 35 functional areas of event production where a risk situation can emerge: for example, ineffective marketing, invalid quality assessment, inadequate supplier choice, administration failure etc. Economic environment emphasizes financial situation: generally financial risks are associated with revenue loss. Potential sources can be found in sponsorship withdraw, fraud, inadequate expenditure, underestimate of budget, theft. The legal environment involves various legal systems

and responsibilities of the event planner to conform with the law: e.g. possible risk sources are failure to abide with the law in safety and security, contractual errors, failure to protect private data, etc. The uncertainty of event production generates cognitive environment as event manager's ability to forecast is not perfect: "the difference between perception and reality is an important source of risk (Tchankova, 2002, 6).

#### 2.3.1.3. Risk analysis

The identification phase provides managers with loads of data and infinite numbers of risk factors but not all of them require concentration, therefore the discovery of potential risks is usually followed by an assessment of findings. The characteristics of a risk, likelihood and consequence of impact are dimensions to be measured (Silvers, 2008, 41-42; Allen et al., 2008, 597-598 ):

- *Likelihood of risk* - is probability that certain risk will occur (Shone,2006, 170; Nickson,2006, 76). Risk probability for different events will vary from "almost certain" to "almost incredible" (proposed by Emergency Management Australia, 2009).

- *Consequence of risk* - is a level of severity it will cause to the environment. This criteria will also vary for different events from "insignificant" to "catastrophic" ( Allen et al., 2008, 597; Emergency Management Australia, 2009). Allen et al. (2008, 598) notices that risks rated as 'catastrophic' cause threats to all areas of the event production.

Combined together those two dimensions determine the level of risk and provide a tool for rating and comparing risks from different categories. Emergency Management Australia (EMA) suggests to frame a qualitative risk matrix to explore the most credible risks. Shone (2006, 170), on the other hand, propose to use third dimension and compare risks' credibility by identifying the number of stakeholders affected. Additionally, Kerzner (2010; 262) offered to calculate cost impact of each risk.

Here comes the question: who decides the likelihood and probability of risks? And how it can be justified that these assumptions are comprehensive and realistic?

Silvers (2008, 41-43) suggests to use an influence diagram which is similar to mind mapping in order to determine how many areas one risk can influence. Nickson (2006, 87) points out that there are many statistical methods to assess the probability of a particular risk, for example.

Finally when the risk is realistically ranked, evaluation takes place. “Risk evaluation is the process of comparing the results of risk analysis with risk criteria to determine whether the risk and/or its magnitude is acceptable or tolerable” (AS/NZS ISO 31000, 2009). Evaluation helps to identify risks which require further actions and which have to be dropped from the process in order not to waste resources, however the line between ‘low risk which requires some attention’ and ‘low risk which is insignificant’ is relatively thin. EMA proposes to use ALARP (as low as reasonably practicable) principle to prioritize risks.

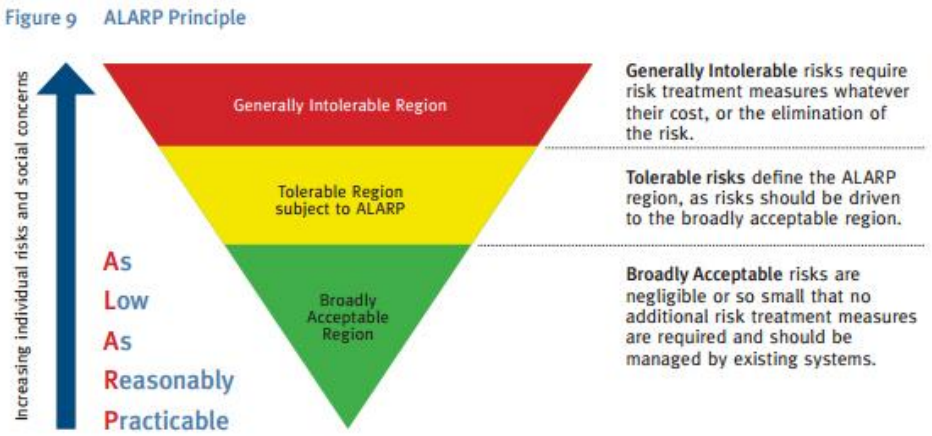


**Figure 3. ALARP diagram (Emergency Management Australia, 2009)**

After all there is one critical point mentioned by Nickson (2006, 77): some low probability risks have catastrophic impacts (like snow in June), initially they are neglected by event planners, and this creates grey area in the concept of risk management.

### 2.3.2. Risk selection

The tolerance rate of risk leads to the following activities of an event planner which are intended to turn 'intolerable' risks into 'tolerable' and prevent any misuse of assets. There are several response options to control the risks (Emergency Management Australia, 2009):

- *Avoidance*. If the risk level is high, the only option is to avoid it. Sometimes this option requires substantial amount of resources (e.g. time, human power, finance, etc.) to perform change and therefore some parts of the event can be cancelled ( Bowdin, 2011, 605; Allen et al.,2008, 598; HSE, 2011).
- *Mitigation*. Because some risks cannot be avoided completely, the impact of tolerable risks typically can be minimized by addressing the cause with proactive plans. Weather conditions cannot be changed, but proper preparations and installations help to reduce the severity of risk. Crowd behavior can be hard to manage however fencing and security provide great assistance (Allen et al.,2008, 600; Guide to safety at sports grounds, 2008, 43). Contingency plans are also viewed as mitigation response actions.
- *Transference*. Risk can be transferred or contracted out to a third party: insurance is a good example (Goldblatt, 1997, 289). Also liability can be forwarded to police and other authorities.
- *Retention*. Minor risks do not require any response action and can be accepted, but not ignored. They rather require constant monitoring in order to keep them on low level. (Silvers, 2008, 43)
- *Plan B or alternatives*. Berlonghi (citided in Bowdin, 2011) noticed that it is important to create plans which will deal with impacts of risks. Silvers (2008, 44) defined those plans as recovery and emergency plans.

### 2.3.3. Monitoring and documentation

Once an appropriate response system has been chosen for the particular risk EMA suggests an array of measuring benefits (whether they are adequate or alternative options will bring more benefit), developing detailed action plans, which will specify the quantity and quality of resources needed, responsibilities, schedule, performance

evaluation issues, reporting and monitoring system. This step is critical for the success of risk management practices because, without correct implementation, it fails in adding any value to the event production. This is a core root of negative impression towards assessing risk management procedure: majority of unskilled event planners avoid it or consider it as “a necessary evil” ( Tarlow, 2002, 223).

Monitoring phase involves constant control of the risk response implementation: controlling risks in an ever-changing environment is a challenge thus tolerable risks might become severe and require alternative response. Examples of monitoring techniques can be checklists, inspections and walk-thoughs, reviews, budgets (Goldblatt, 1997, 287-288). They can be categorized in physical, behavioral actions, systems and strategies. The ability to react towards changes is essential for event planner. (Silvers, 2008, 44)

The documentation of plans and activities is a primary responsibility of the event manager. Recorded data can be reviewed later and used as a benchmark for other events; it also assists in identifying flaws in planning and implementation. Moreover, Goldblatt (1997, 289-291) points out that documentation can serve as an important evidence of responsible behavior and due diligence in case of severe accidents. Such documents as insurance contracts, feedbacks, and incident and fault reports, risk analysis reports can act an important part for instance in court (Silvers, 2008, 46-47).

### 2.3.4. Communication

Communication is a vital part of any project, it facilitates a healthy environment and progress of the project. In event production, especially for large-scale events, rotation of information among departments and external stakeholders ensures success of the event. Effective communication involves the following issues: an understanding of risk management concept (and importance of it) by the management team, staff, volunteers and the other involved parties (for example, through guides, staff handbooks), distribution of risk management plans and changes to the internal stakeholders and receiving feedback (for example, through scheduled progress meetings), risk reporting system (Silvers, 2008, 184-186).

A simple and rather informal culture of communication assists in delivering important data to the right people on time. Communication is also required during implementation and post-production: walkie-talkies, phones, radios, risk register systems and etc. (Allen et al., 2008, 606)

## 3. FOCUS AREAS

In spite of the complexity and importance of sports events, most organizers still do not consider risk management as a separate entity of event planning and implementation procedures. However, best practices can be recognized in the field of entertainment and recreation management. The London Olympics 2012 may serve as a good example of risk management strategy implementation: Olympic Games have experienced a numerous amount of uncertainties and adverse situations at least for the past hundred years (budget deficits, natural disasters, unstable political environment etc.). Consequently the Olympic committee took risk as an organizing concept in 2008 (Olymponomycs, 2008). In Australia, New Zealand, and the UK a tremendous amount of cities provide risk management guides for planning events and require organizers to perform at least basic assessment of risks and threats in order to comply with legally required duty of care (e.g. North East Festivals and Events Toolkit, 2012; Event safety information sheer developed by Government of South Australia, 2010; Risk management of events handbook created by Sports and Recreation New Zealand, 2007).

Nevertheless, research over the other countries with a main concentration on Europe unveiled that generally risk assessment practices are integrated into the planning and decision-making process.

Even the most responsible organizers such as the committee of London Olympics questioned feasibility of “risk management of everything” and focused their attention on several areas where this concept seems applicable for the mega-event: security and geopolitics, olymponomics and financial management, licensing and sponsorship, infrastructure and reputation (Olymponomycs, 2008). In the research conducted after Olympic Games in Beijing Qinqin and Wang (2009) identified the following manageable risks: people-carried, fund-carried, facilities-carried, time-carried, information-carried and media-carried. Also, earlier in 2005 Eisenhauer

studied the concept in the context of medium and large scale sports events in New Zealand and claimed that “risk management is the primary tool for reducing the incidence of injury and managing an organization’s potential exposure to loss and legal liability”.

In this chapter the author of this study aligned and limited the focus on the following areas: program design, safety and security, financial control, marketing issues - defined in the introduction. In addition, the author considered environmental issues as sustainable event management is a topic of current societal interest.

## 3.1. Program design

Right after a hosting institute has determined the objective for holding an event and established a feasibility analysis, the concept can be designed. The concept usually discusses timing, locations and venues, facilities required and availability and content of the program. Masterman (2009, 65) suggested that at this stage of planning the host should critically analyze the idea by asking “what is the event and what does it look like?”

Risk factors which substantially influence the timing of the event embrace predicted weather conditions, competition, availability of resources and appeal to the target audience. Weather conditions might cause problems with traffic or event activities, competitive events may attract some of the potential event audience. Finally, some resources such as human resources might be unavailable for chosen dates. Wrong dates possess the power to ruin the success of the event and expose it to financial losses due to lack of participants or cancelation (Stewart, 2010). In order to avoid these risks, the organizing committee should conduct an analysis on possible competition, adverse weather, resources and select an appropriate day.

Content of the program and scheduling sustain certain risks: inappropriate content, overlapping activities, unrealistic timing of each activity. Particular problems usually emerge with events being off schedule, which might create irritation and dissatisfaction of the participants. While creating tournament schedules organizers have to estimate the time needed in practice for each activity, take into

consideration the distance between multiple locations and allocate surplus time. (Silvers, 2008, 158-161)

The venue selection for an event is accompanied by many risks: inappropriate capacity or location, lack of facilities required and lack of services provision, high rental costs, unavailability of the venue, poor condition, and lack of comparability with participants' expectations or needs (eventeducation.com, 2007; Silvers, 2008, 265). Most of the risks can be avoided through thorough investigation of the location (for example, city), familiarizing with possible venues, making site visits, negotiating prices and booking sites beforehand (Online learning for sports management, 2012).

Development of the venue for the needs of the event and further management of the site is a crucial part of sports event realization: as a matter of fact risk-free environment can only emerge from diligent technical plans. Silvers (2008, 267) names several potential concerns: configuration of the place, design of the activity areas, compliance with sports event regulations and technical safety.

## 3.2. Marketing

Silvers (2008, 213) recognized marketing as a dynamic process which facilitates interaction among stakeholders and emphasized that risks emerge throughout it due to uncertainty regarding customer profiles, needs and expectations, their behavior models and communication approaches required.

Marketing major sports event always starts with a marketing plan which comprises strategy and action plans together. Allen et al. (2008, 281-284) stated that marketing strategies are created based on accurate analysis of the resources, goals and environment and are vital for the overall success and even survival of the event. Numerous amounts of risks can evolve from incorrect analysis, wrong market segmentation and goal setting initiatives.

One of the main risks associated with resource analysis is overestimating of the available resources. Ambitious marketing plans require an ample amount of time, money and labor when resources are generally limited. SWOT analysis is a proper tool to investigate environment and reveal the scope of resources. (Watt, 1996)

Time-wise marketing activities raise success of the campaign and allow avoiding risk of insignificant spending: advertising, promotions and PR activities have to be allocated over a specific time frame in order to maximize an opportunity. (Silvers, 2008, 214)

Spots events are often criticized for poor promotional activity due to the fact that 'people' factor is not always recognized in the marketing mix: therefore the message that the event organizer strives to communicate becomes ambiguous (Watt, 1996). Another risk associated with neglecting the 'people' factor lies in choosing wrong communication approaches and channels. Silvers (2008, 215-218) outlined several particular advertising and promotion problems:

- Without selective targeting mass media attract undesirable attendees
- Printed materials may contain outdated information
- Electronic media might be considered as spam
- Promotional activities might be performed in a decentralized way

Most of these potential risks can be avoided when the target is clearly defined.

Finally, Masterman (2009, 236-238) argues that the implementation of the marketing strategy has to follow documented plan and be flexible with unforeseen changes. The role of the event organizer is to monitor whether the process is meeting objectives or alternative decisions should take place and to establish an effective communication framework.

On the other hand, marketing represents an essential tool for fund raising for an event. A successful fund raising strategy brings value to the event in a form of sponsorship and support from the authorities (Silvers, 2008, 227). Sponsorship can be described as a 'win-win' partnership between event organization committee and sponsoring company as both parties strive for the benefits: commercial or physical value in return for consumer attention. In this case, both sides are open to a certain degree of risk. (Cunningham et al., 2001)

Majority of events - either commercial or non-profit - require external funding. Most forecasting budgets even reflect this need in the 'prospective revenue calculations' column. Though major sports events naturally drive cosmic interest for sponsorship,

there are two critical issues: firstly, identification of right potential sponsors is challenging and requires deep analysis, and approaching 'wrong' companies leads towards loss of time, resources and opportunities (Jorah et al., 2006); secondly, the event might become over dependant on sponsor funding.

Masterman (2009, 297-299, 308 ) observed that the similarity to the target markets is a core issue which should be taken into consideration when preparing sponsorship obtaining strategy: this is the reason why a numerous amount of championships are sponsored by sports clothing and shoes, medical treatment organizations, sports clubs and etc. But it is not the only important focus. Nowadays, business attitudes towards sponsorship have changed: event marketing employed into a corporate strategy has substituted traditional philanthropic activity with a view on commercial benefits. Thus, every investment pursues strategic objective of the company (Cunningham et al., 2001). Risk which an event planner pursues while approaching a company is associated with uncertainty about company's strategy: firm might decline the offer as it cannot fulfill its goals. However, this risk can be avoided by conducting a deliberate research (Masterman, 2009, 297).

Market research assists in potential sponsor list preparation, but the identification of appropriate sponsors does not eliminate the risk of missing opportunity to achieve partnership: company might be approached in a wrong way (wrong contact person, not on time, unclear message). Vaibnav (2008, 187) suggested establishing a sponsorship acquisition strategy which has to include detailed action plan and assign responsible team in order to enhance accuracy, cost-effectiveness and minimize risks.

Though sponsorship adds value to the event, partner companies can cause limitations in some areas of the project: especially major sponsoring companies might want to influence the project (Tum et al.,2006, 45). In order to avoid a clash of interests Vaibnav (2008, 197) proposed that all responsibilities of both sides should be negotiated before binding sponsoring agreement. But it is essential that event organizer foresees the situation and anticipates the impact of sponsorship withdrawal (in case of severe conflict, for example): whether it will cause a threat to the production of an event or just to the final revenue (Slivers, 2008, 227).

Sponsorship contracts should clearly state donation amount and value, expectations and responsibilities of both sides. The sponsors communicate their goals and objectives to the organizers, in return the organizers promise to fulfill responsibilities which include on-site and online recognition of the sponsor. Nevertheless, research shows that in many cases audience fails to recognize sponsoring organizations of major sports event due to the high density of other brands and logos: each team has its own sponsor. Neither event organizer nor sponsoring companies can influence that (Jorah et al., 2006).

A particular concern for major sports organizers is ambush marketing. For example, in 1996, Atlanta Olympic Games, Nike launched an aggressive marketing campaign without registering as an official sponsor. That incident provoked organizers to anticipate this new risk and create protection strategies (McKelvey, 2008, 551). In a broad sense, ambush marketing does not cause direct money losses, but it negatively affects potential sponsorship revenues. Trade marking and intellectual property laws partially block unauthorized marketing activities, but an event organizer is responsible for protecting official sponsors through building awareness by using sponsor lists in promotional material, on website. Other tactics may include creating unique logos for sponsors, making exclusivity agreements with sponsors and integration of their activities (Hartland, 2005).

## 3.3. Financial control

One of the other major sports events' concerns is finance: it is said that the larger event and the more time for planning and preparation it requires, the more accurately budgeting forecasts must be executed (Masterman, 2004, 99). Feasibility of the whole event project in many aspects depends on sufficient financial planning. The challenge is to determine which areas of a particular event production are exposed to financial risks and losses. Event management theorists (Watt, 1996; Masterman, 2009; Tum et al., 2006; Silvers, 2004, 2008) determine the following issues as the most problematic: funding, financial forecast and budgeting, costing, pricing and control of finances.

Funding of sports events depends on a great amount of sources: loans, grants, equity, retained earnings, participant and spectator fees, broadcasting rights,

merchandising, commissions, sponsorship. Inability to identify sources or obtain decent funding undermines event survival. Also, an organizer might become over dependant on certain sources and underestimate the value of others. Financial plans control financial pattern of the event and reduce introduced risks.

Budgets encompass strategic financial goals of the event, measure reliability of those and set targets for expenditure and revenues. Accuracy of the budget is crucial for finance handling: it must strongly rely on detailed historical research (similar events, for example), expertise of the financial manger, current environment research (e.g. advertising, facility, service costs, etc.) and consulting throughout the organizational team (Online learning for sports management, 2012). Budgets represent forecasting plans, not standards: due to dynamic environment, flexibility should be a core characteristic of these plans: additional costs might be added or revenue may not reach expected numbers (Silvers, 2008, 163-164).

Budgets are not limitless; therefore cost-effective strategies ensure the stability of a financial position. The aim of the cost-effective strategies is to allocate possible expenses, reduce them without harming the image and the quality of the event. Allen (2006, 332-333) proposed a structured framework to overcome the challenge of detecting those costs: conceptual estimate (brainstorming), feasibility study (comparison to similar events) and definite estimate (by distribution of tenders).

Pricing strategies may vary for sports events depending on the goals: revenue generation, annual event organization, non-profit etc. Kotler (2008, 328) stated that many decision makers make mistakes by forming cost-based prices rather than value-based ones which leads to loss of potential revenue.

Cash flow is a performance indictor of an established budgeting system. Therefore, the production of scheduled cash flow that reports throughout the planning of an event is vital for financial control. Adverse liquidity is a common pitfall for many events, however time-wise negotiation of payment terms, sufficient funding and the reduction of fixed costs proactively solve the problem (Masterman, 2009, 125, 129).

## 3.4. Safety and Security

Risk management strategy for event security was developed and formulated into the Sport Event Security Assessment Model (SESAM) in 2005 by the Department of Homeland Security of the USA. The framework captures several steps. The first step involves identification of SESAM team whose responsibility is to combine allocation and coordination of possible risks. During the second step the team explores and classifies assets using various resources and tools (surveys, brainstorming, records, and inspection). Third step determines potential threats (Hall et al., 2007). SESAM enables venue manager together with event organizer to calculate the vulnerability and criticality of a situation: circumstances owing to which environment is exposed to risk and what impact this threat will cause. Schwarz (2010, 186) clarifies vulnerability as a weakness that indicates which areas require more focus. Those usually include "lack of emergency preparedness, perimeter control, access control, credentialing, training, communication, and physical protection systems"(Schwarz; 2010, 186) . Impact analysis, on the other hand, determines the scope of damage: number of potentially injured people, lost property, harm to the environment, infrastructure, and cost of recovery actions (Hall et al., 2007). In line with the general risk management concept, the last phases of SESAM include risk assessment (based on previous analysis) and proposed further actions.

Schwarz (2010, 184) argues that serious security-related risks can emerge in sports venues: the major ones are terrorism, crowd disorder and loss, thefts and other crimes. After the 9/11 tragedy security control became a number one precaution for all large-scale events. Constant improvement of security measures lays on the shoulders of the sports event organizers and takes a great deal of time and money (Taylor and Toohey, 2011). Various authors (Silvers, 2008, 132 ; Taylor and Toohey, 2011; Jennings and Lodge, 2011; Butler, 2010) state that major sports events frequently appear to be a target for terrorist attacks. In 2008 the Dakar Car Rally was cancelled for the first time in 30-years history due to the threat of Al Quaeda terror attack (Ashdown for the Guardian, 2008). Later in July 2008, a suicide bomber killed 14 people during Sri Lanka marathon (USA today, 2008). Authorities of Sochi (host of the 2014 Winter Olympics) are currently concerned with time-wise measures to anticipate terrorist attacks from the Chechen separatist group (USA today, 2012).

Although a mega sports events like the Olympics attract a large scale of expected terrorist attention with a potential to cause mass casualties, smaller events represent soft targets which pose an opportunity for 'surprise terror'(Bliss, 2011). Security plans for an event must anticipate this threat: security surveillance and circulation, admission control measures, site inspections help to prevent most of the malicious activity (Taylor and Toohey, 2011). The costs of planning, implementing and managing a robust security infrastructure around major sporting events are significant. Nonetheless, not every sports event budget can handle those: usually the event planners prepare plans for the 'worst case scenarios' and try to tune staff and volunteer actions by providing certain codes of behavior, training and practicing rescue procedures (Tarlow, 2002, 12).

Sports events naturally gather large amounts of people and that, according to Doukas (2006), raises the possibility of unfavorable happenings, that comprise of the danger of miscommunication and misbehavior. Crowd disorder became a frequent phenomenon on sports competitions all over the World and caused a range of problems to sports event managers recently. Yet most researchers ( Tarlow, 2002, 85-88; Silvers, 2008; Doukas, 2006; Rahmat et al, 2011) encompass crowd management activities not only to avoid crowd aggressive behaviors, but to control crowd in general and lead them through the event in a safe manner. Crowd management practices are integrated into crowd movement, behavior and control procedures (Silvers, 2008, 297-299) with four elements: forces, information, time and space (Rahmat et al, 2011). Abbot (2001, 261-263) states that information is shared among the employees and then communicated to the crowd through various channels: orally, virtually, through written information and signage and on time. Understanding of time-wise information shapes crowd behavior which is later controlled by forces (personnel) and space arrangements.

In addition, minor crimes and hazardous activities such as theft, hooliganism, vandalism, unauthorized entries etc may occur during competitions and other sports events (Schwarz,2010, 184). Lack of control over these mentioned threats causes loss of capability, credibility, equipment, money, people, time, property, information and materials. Loss prevention is a number one priority of the security function. Loss prevention tactics are divided into three categories: physical, behavioral and

procedural. Physical tactic creates safe environment with access barriers, safety equipment, borders and other tangible elements, while behavioral tactic involve training, communication system, responsibility definition, rules, policies and culture. Procedural tactic facilitates access control, allocation of resources, monitoring and emergency planning. (Silvers, 2008, 289-293)

The meaning of the 'event safety' might seem similar to the 'event security', however, while security procedures and actions protect attendants and assets from mostly intended active threats, safety policy ensures safe environment, free from unintended random hazards (Alberchtsen, 2003, 6-7).

In many countries event organizers carry the legal responsibility of ensuring healthy and safe environment for both - public and employees and identify and prevent potential accidents. According to Tarlow (2002, ), Silvers (2008), Guide to safety at sports ground (2008), a sports event organizer has to provide safe behavior policy and guarantee fire safety, weather protection, hygiene and food safety, sanitation, technical safety and safe evacuation plans.

## 3.5. Environmental management

Sustainable event management has become a common trend nowadays. More and more organizers include potential environmental impacts in the area of major concerns. Jones (2009, 3) determines the following sources of environmental risks: energy, transport, waste management, resource management, procurement. Threats to the environment derived from those sources comprise waste and pollution production, misuse of resources, noise pollution. Today authorities of the cities usually supply event organizers with environmental policies which contain information about waste handling, emission control, resource savings etc. (Raj and Musgrave, 2009, 13-14, 34, 66)

Pollution can be defined as the distribution of hazardous substances in the atmosphere, water and soil (Raj and Musgrave, 2009, 67). Sports events indirectly can produce three types of pollution (air, water and soil), but the main threat is generally air pollution caused by $CO_2$, $NO_2$, CO emissions. Emissions emerge from transportation of participants and material to and out of the site. Many sports

competitions are organized in several venues and that increases the use of transportation and therefore increases emission rates. Environmental policies usually suggest to plan public transportation for attendants to decrease the use of personal vehicles, plan material supply beforehand in order to avoid misuse of logistics transportation and choose local suppliers (Jones, 2009, 78, 81-84).

Vast waste production is a usual consequence of event organization: large amounts of people buy and consume various products including food, construction preparations for an event produce certain amount of waste. Another problem associated with waste, in particular bio-waste, is methane emissions which cause air pollution. Yet, the waste "problem" cannot be completely eliminated, but the amount of waste can be reduced. Summarized solutions from environmental guides from the UK, Australia, New Zealand suggest reducing waste by planning and predicting quantities needed, reusing materials left, recycling glass, paper, tin, plastic, separating waste and encouraging attendants to do the same.

Resource management is strongly associated with waste management as inability of the organizers to manage resources leads to additional waste. Resources management consists of procurement control, energy, water and materials handling. Sports competitions sometimes require additional temporary facilities like tents or pavilions which later will be dismounted. The organizer must anticipate these needs and analyze whether existing facilities could fulfill those or plan alternatives to avoid unnecessary waste. The choice of materials is another important issues – it is widely suggested to use recyclable materials wherever possible and to calculate amounts needed. Energy consumption is dependent on facilities, however risks of energy waste might be minimized by using energy-efficient equipment. Large sports events consume enormous quantities of water which can hardly be controlled. But what event organizers can do is to encourage responsible behavior amongst attendees by providing essential information about resources use, not only water, but food and energy too (Raj and Musgrave, 2009, 68-73).

## 3.6. Theoretical framework

The study's framework comprises several knowledge areas discussed earlier in the second subchapter of the theoretical part: financial management, marketing planning, safety & security management, program design and environmental management. Each area represents one of the event management domains formulated by the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK). Subchapter two explains how the risk management framework is practically implemented into the body of planning for an event. The author uses EMBOK's risk management framework as a benchmarking tool for the analysis of several operational planning areas of the World Masters Athletics (WMA) Championship.

# 4. METHODOLOGY

The following chapter discusses the chosen research method, and design of the study, data collection and analysis and information delivery method. It also provides justification for each chosen technique and method. The last paragraph of this chapter comprises reliability and validity which the author anticipated and defined during the research process.

## 4.1. Research method

In research methodology studies the researchers generally distinguish between two completely opposite methods: qualitative and quantitative. Their contrapositive natures can be characterized by alternative forms of knowledge they allow to create (Blaxter, 2010, 60-63). Qualitative method is concentrated on collecting various amounts of information which cannot be presented in a numerical form. Analysis of such information aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of the topic. According to Clayton (2010, 95) qualitative research strives to answer *why* and *how* questions and therefore investigates the process and experiences. However Silverman (2006, 45) suggests not to over idealize this method as it might contain the danger of subjective data research.

The other method – quantitative – relies mainly on numeric data. It tends to identify relationship between variables and provide structured objective analysis of the studied subject to acquire generalized results (Altinay, 2008, 75-76). Also, quantitative methodology is often employed when the researcher aims to test the theory which is associated with a deductive approach (Hilary, 2010, 42).

As the purpose of this research was to investigate the behavior of event organizers, their experience and processes employed towards risk management, qualitative research methodology was considered to be the most suitable one for tackling the research problem. The qualitative approach requires less rigid structure definition (Silverman, 2006, 43) and therefore was a more appropriate way to conduct explorative research where the author was still able to adjust the analysis method during the research process. As well, the author was not interested in gathering statistics based on risk management strategies in the Finnish event management as

no sign of prior researches on this topic was found: hence, the research would have no grounds or benchmarks to generate some reliable statistics.

## 4.2. Research design

There are many research strategies that can be utilized to create a research design for a particular study. Altinay (2008, 77-83) names the following: grounded theory, ethnography, action research, survey, experiment and case study. As Yin (1994, 3-6) argues, each of these strategies has its own framework, advantages and disadvantages. Hence, the same topic can be addressed with various approaches.

For this research the author chose single case study design. In case studies the researcher usually pursues limited control over the context of the study (Plowright, 2011, 16-17) and it was suitable for this research. Case study usually investigates a contemporary event (Yin, 1994, 1): as World Masters Athletics (WMA) championship that took place this year, it allows examining the current view on risk management in Finland. Finally, the variety of available evidence in case study research supported reliability and detailed data collection.

## 4.3. Data collection

In order to gather sufficient empirical data the author utilized triangulation method suggested by single case study research theorists (Yin, 1994, 79; Tellis, 1997) and composed of different sources of primary information. The evidence included: interviews, project plans, memos and online document archives.

Interview informants were determined through studying the members of the organizing committee. Prospective interviewees were then contacted through email. In total the researcher conducted 4 interviews with the members of the organizing committee who agreed to participate. Each respondent was responsible for a particular area of the event planning. The author questioned Kalevi Olin who was a chairman of the local organizing committee; general secretary of the event Mikko Pajunen who was responsible for the project planning and was interviewed upon risks handling in marketing planning, security planning and partially for environmental planning ; Markku Koistinen who was responsible for an administration and finance and was interviewed on financial risks handling; Esä

Kaihlajärvi - competition manager – who was also a general secretary of the bidding group and was interviewed on program design risks. Four interviews were conducted in person. The in-person interviews were conducted in a merely semi -structured approach which guarantied the researcher a role as an active participant of the interview that established a two-way communication process.

The goal of the empirical research was not to compare the risk management approaches amongst the managers, but rather define how those were processed in several different areas of event planning and compare the outcomes with the theoretical framework. The author decided that the same questions asked from every interviewee could not create an in-depth knowledge over the case study and might induce challenges for informants to give credible answers. Therefore the researcher made a decision to generate a framework where questions somewhat differ for each informant, but the meaning of the asked questions would converge and measure how risks were viewed by the organizing committee. The general interview guide approach was implemented as a data collection strategy (McNamara, 2009). Flexibility was characterized as the main advantage of the chosen methodology for this study as it permits the researcher to create several general topics and to rely more on the detailed spontaneous questions when needed.

Thus, the interview questions were divided in two parts. One part of the interviews was structured in the same way for all the participants and consisted of the following questions (noting that the wording and sequence was varying, and several informants answered the third question simultaneously with the second one):

- Describe your tasks and responsibilities for this event?
- Are you aware of the risk management concept?
- What risks could you anticipate?

The other part of the interview was strongly dependant on the responses of the first part and included two alternative sets of questions for each participant. The first set of questions was considered to be used if risk assessment was performed. Otherwise, the author utilized more specific alternative set of questions which directly measured and compared the informant's activities towards the benchmarks stated earlier in the theoretical part. Alternative set of questions implied inductive approach: firstly,

the author was investigating which actions took place and than what provoked these actions. In practice all interviewees answered the alternative sets of questions with a large amount of probing questions except for Mr. Olin who answered general questions. The interview questions are shown in Appendix 1.

Other secondary data sources such as the project plan, security plan, and environmental plan were received from the general secretary. In addition, the author used memo records from WMA General Assembly in Lahti, 2009, where the City of Jyväskylä presented its bid for WMA championship 2012, WMA bid guidelines and environmental guidelines for event organizers developed by the City of Jyväskylä. Finally, the personal observation notes of the author assisted in critical analysis. Direct observation was conducted during the event to obtain objective data about the outcomes of the planning activity and its implementation.

## 4.4. Data analysis

Collected data requires careful analysis and structured interpretation. The first step suggested by Altinay (2008, 170) is familiarization with raw data. Documentation and observation notes were reviewed and analyzed for the first time before commencing the process of interviewing. That was done in order to receive insights of the researched subject and structure interview questions in a more comprehensive way. Interviews were recorded with a digital recording device. The author transcribed raw data and reviewed it several times with other primary data documents.

As stated above, the author was not aiming to compare the answers of the informants: focus areas were sampled by the researcher based on common challenging areas in sports event management mentioned in the chapter number two and case study familiarization; in addition, focus subjects were limited by the number of members of the organizing committee who agreed to participate in the research. Hence, the categorizing of the obtained data was based on the processes of risk management framework presented in the study. As thus far stated, each interview covered one or several of the following topics depending on the knowledge available to the respondent: marketing planning, safety & security, finance, program design, and environmental management. Each topic comprised of challenges or risks encountered by the managers and those which they were not able to anticipate,

solutions proposed and actual situation, and communication pattern. An analysis of the data was performed through examining which elements of risk management can be found in the planning activities of the interviewees and plans.

## 4.5. Reliability and validity

Reliability of research findings is always measured by consistency: different researchers pursuing the same goal should come to a single conclusion whilst conducting a study based on the same field. Silverman (2006, 282-283) noticed that reliability can be reached through careful and transparent interpretation of the data, standardized categorizing approach and the examination of similar research studies. As previous studies have not been detected, the researcher was induced to create categorizing framework which was previously mentioned in the data analysis section. Finally, the research findings are supported with direct quotes from the interviews or other primary data sources as needed.

Validity represents accuracy of the research and controls whether statements are true or not. Validity of the findings can be justified by ensuring adequate sources of data, by constant comparison of interpreted information with raw data, by using other sources of knowledge (Silverman, 2006, 291). In order to validate received data, the author conducted the final interview with Mr. Olin, chairman of the local organizing committee (LOC), which allowed affirming the objectivity of the answers of the operational team members.

# 5. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

## 5.1. Case description: WMA Championship 2012 in Jyväskylä

The World Master Athletics organization (former World Association of Veteran Athletics) governs the World championships for male and female athletes over the age of 35. World championships are organized every two years since 1975 in various cities all over the World by local organizing committees. The first Indoor Championship was held in 2004 in Sindelfingen, Germany. In total WMA organized 19 outdoor, 5 indoor, 7 non-stadia championships so far (WMA Short History, 2011).

Each Indoor Championship (as well as Outdoor) includes standard stadia events:

- Running events (60m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 3000m, 60m Hurdles, 4x200m Relay)
- 3000m Track Race Walk
- High Jump
- Pole Vault
- Long Jump
- Triple Jump
- Shot Put
- Weight Throw
- Indoor Pentathlon

Optionally a local organizing committee may organize Non-Stadia events: Half Marathon, 8km Cross Country, 10km Road Race Walk, Hammer Throw, Discus Throw, and Javelin Throw. (WMA Bidder guidelines, 2012)

In 2009 during the WMA General Assembly meeting in Lahti, Jyväskylä's bidding committee presented the bid for the 2012 WMA Indoor Championship. The idea of hosting an international event was initiated by Esä Kaihlajärvi with support of the Jyväskylän Kenttäurheilijat (JKU) track and field club. The Mayor of Jyväskylä introduced the contents of the bid to the participants: proposed venues, preliminary schedule, infrastructure of the city and its preparedness for a huge international event. After the voting procedure organizing rights were awarded to the city of Jyväskylä. (WMA Lahti memo, 2009)

The responsibility for arranging championship was carried by the JKU track and field club, which was organizing other large sports events like: the Finlandia marathon and National championships, in the city of Jyväskylä. The local organizing committee was composed selectively already in 2010 and was chaired by Mr. Olin. The general Secretary together with operational teams took care of the practical matters. Local organizing committee (LOC) consisted of 23 members including representatives from Finnish Athletic Association and WMA. Organizational structure is presented in the figure 4 below. (WMA2012 Jyväskylä website)

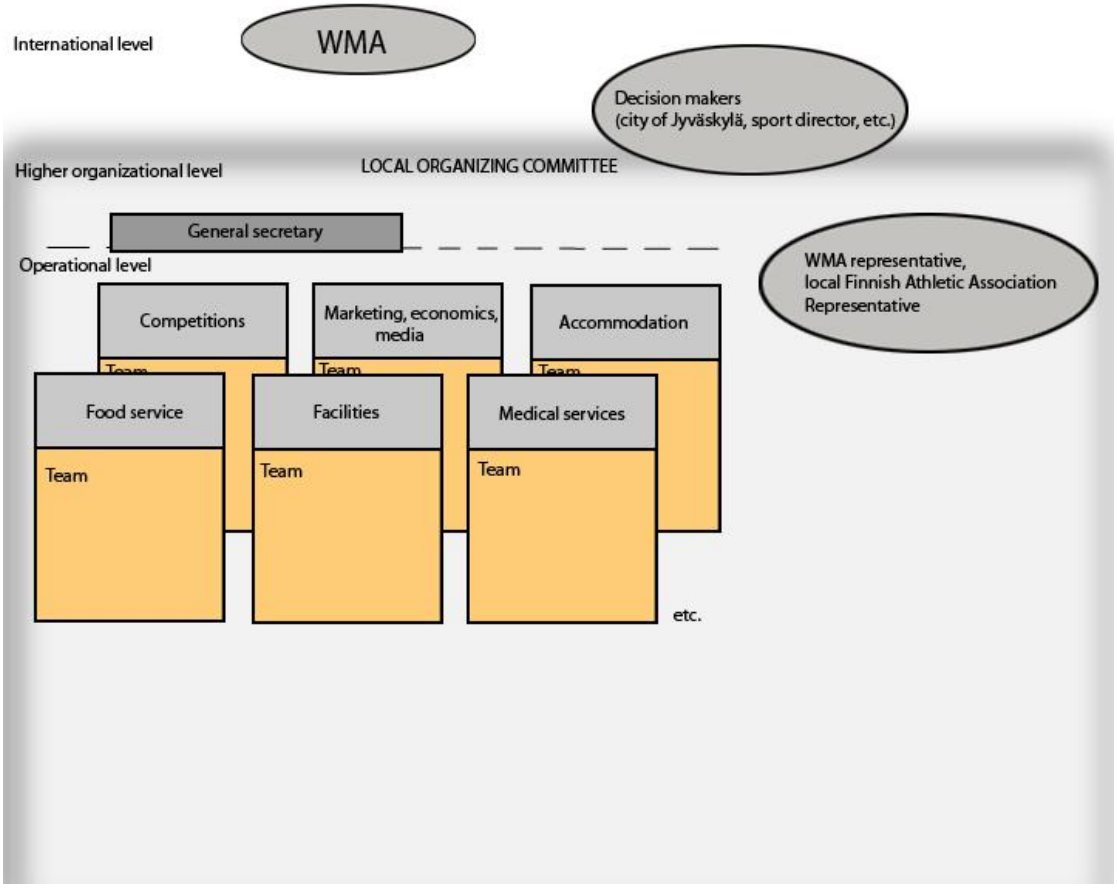


**Figure 4. Organizational structure of the LOC. 2012**

The competition was successfully held on April 3-8, 2012 with the help of 581 volunteers. The main arena for competitions was arranged in Hippos sports hall. In addition, Harju stadium was used for outdoor throwing competitions and several routes were laid for cross country and half-marathon near the stadium and the harbor. Participants arrived from 66 different countries and the total number of registered athletes reached 2700 people. A total sum of 233 000 euro was raised

from the registration. This event left a social and economical legacy for the city. Report about the competitions was broadcasted in the local media; many participants shared their experiences on social networks and also raised international awareness about the city. The amount of money raised for the city was calculated to be at an average of 2 two million euro (JKU report, 2012).

The organizing committee fulfilled several main objectives (JKU report, 2012):

- to succeed in the arrangements of the event which was the most challenging task because the racing events were rotating from the morning till late afternoon. Based on the feedback received from the athletes games' arrangements were successfully performed due to the firm control ensured by the management team of the event. Organizers thrived to maintain and continue the excellent reputation of Jyvaskyla city and Finland in general.
- to win ample amount of medals. In fact, national results were overwhelming and brought Finnish sportsmen several medals.
- to upgrade the economic success of Jyväskylä area. Apart from preliminary calculated profit, the competition commissioner – JKU - received an economical guarantee for the future years of existence.
- to promote health and well-being of the increasing aging population and Finnish nation. The competition offered great opportunities for every athlete, each participant could select tournament on his or her choice.

## 5.2. Results

The findings of the research which include extracts from the interviews and written organizational plans together with observation notes were analyzed and logically grouped in the following section.

### 5.2.1. Awareness

Three out of four interviewed managers admitted their unawareness of the risk management concept in general, however expressed overall understanding of the definition of risk. One informant, however, displayed familiarity with the concept.

Analysis of the written plans did not reveal any formally implemented and documented risk management practices.

### 5.2.2. Competence

Organizational skills of the interviewees are beyond doubts, yet the author wanted to uncover what served and serves as an asset to the management team which was not generally aware of risk management framework. The question "Describe your tasks and responsibilities" together with the sub-question "what helped you in performing your task?" revealed the following:

> *"Mostly brainstorming. I haven't organized track & field competitions before <…> We brainstormed with different groups which involved students. I get the knowledge from different people and I share with them. We had four student volunteers in the office with whom I was discussing whether to do that or this. Also, I got the knowledge about sports marketing from my studies <...> We didn't receive any documents from the previous WMA championships, but I think, it could help also…"*
>
> *"We discussed important issues with local organizing committee"*
>
> *"Basically, all competitions are the same in terms of organization. I was preparing timetables for 20 years. It was very hard to do that in the beginning because you have to know how it works, how much time is needed. Then you know how to do that in a right way."*
>
> *"I think, some people recommended me for may be my strong international and foreign experience in different fields – sports, politics. <…> Then we had Vesa Häggblom who is very strong in terms of linguistics. He has also many years of experience on big sports events, prize giving ceremonies. Then there was Esä Kaihlajärvi. He is really competent in terms of all technical matters, programs, schedules…"*

Thus, the respondents admitted that own experience and knowledge sharing formed the platform for efficient planning.

### 5.2.3. Program design

Time and place are constraining factors for event production, and the LOC could anticipate the importance of those:

> *"The first risk relates to time and place where these events occur <…> I was not a member of the bidding committee, but I know that they had great discussions about feasibility of the event in Jyväskylä at this time"*

**Time**

There are several problems or risks that were associated with these dimensions. Time frame for Indoor championships is restricted by WMA association: March is a recommended month for holding competitions (WMA Bidder guidelines, 2012). This basically limited the flexibility of the event and also created some areas of concern. First of all, organizers were slightly nervous about weather conditions because Indoor championships include several outdoor tournaments such as hammer, discus, and javelin throw (WMA Lahti memo, 2009). Still, the average weather for March in Jyväskylä fluctuates between -8 and 1 C degrees with a considerable amount of precipitations almost equal to February rates which could distract outdoor competitions (Wikipedia, 2012).

> *" …risk was related to the season. Is it going to snow or is it going to be icy – we didn't know that <…> it was especially important for outdoor competitions"*

> *" Weather? I think maybe it was a problem, but what could we do?"*

> *" it is something that we can't control, yet we had a lot of discussions about the weather conditions and what we were going to do in case of heavy snow. In the end we managed quite well, we used cleaning machines to clear the competition spaces in the early morning. "*

Secondly, competition was seen as a potential threat to gain sufficient attention from the sportsmen.

> *"We knew that in Australia they held quite a big event almost one month before our event. This was a risk, because we planned the event based on 2 000 – 3000*

*participants and everything was prepared for that amount of people, so we were thinking whether or not people would prefer Finland…"*

Time-associated risks were intended to be diminished or even avoided by changing the dates from March to the beginning of April which was partially a success except for the weather conditions. The LOC was bound to implement recovery actions mentioned in the commentary earlier.

**Place**

On the other hand, "the place" of the event – specifically, location – caused only obscure concerns about the willingness of the athletes to visit northern Europe and not even capital of Finland.

*"We were concerned whether the athletes would like to go to the far north"*

Venues for the competition were chosen intuitively on the idea initiation stage of the project as they are the only places in Jyväskylä which were situated at a reasonably small distance from each other and were able to hold the proposed number of participants. Therefore there was no physical risk associated with venue selection.

*"Hippos hall and Harju were decided to be used before the bidding, of course. Well, Hippos hall is the most suitable place to hold planned amount of athletes. We thought about Killeri at first, but it was not comfortable"*

However, during the planning the organizers discovered that hammer throw competition could not fit into the schedule of the Harju stadium tournaments. Also, the danger of hitting other contestants made it impossible to conduct this competition at the Hippos Hall arena (interview with Mr. Kaihlajärvi). Thus, hammer throw competition was transferred outside of the Hippos Hall under specially constructed tent.

The cross-country and marathon routes were carefully designed based on previous events' experience. Preliminary routes could cause safety risks (e.g. traffic accidents). Marathon and cross-country routes were transferred to another location to avoid interruptions with traffic roads.

*"Cross-country was previously in Laajavuori, but we would have to cut the road and involve police services. So for safety issues we decided to move cross-country to Harju and half-marathon to the harbor, especially there was newly built pavement."*

*"We tested those routes during other previously held events."*

**Scheduling**

Finally, development of the schedule for each competition was challenging. Risks of inadequate planning could distract the program schedule and cause dissatisfaction of the athletes. A preliminary schedule was created according to the bidding guidelines, however after critical analysis the competition manager decided that it lacked feasibility. In order to avoid timing problems the competition manager revised the drafted bidding schedules more carefully and estimated actual time needed for each tournament. As such, several competitions were executed at the same time to save time.

*"I created draft schedule before the bidding meeting. I knew that it was a little bit inaccurate and I reviewed it later several times. Main problem was to fit pentathlon competitions for different age groups as they take a lot of time. Then I also had to think which competitions we can run at the same time: so we created places A and B for jumps and throws at Hippos arena and places A and B at Harju arena. If we had only one competition at a time the day would be 4 hour longer and everyone would be tired in the end."*

**Monitoring and documenting**

Decisions made regarding the place and time of the event generally did not require continuous monitoring as they could be characterized as instant decisions and were recorded in the project plan. Yet, adverse weather conditions forced the management to monitor recovery activities:

*" I was early in the morning looking how situation is"*

Schedules were discussed with LOC and written down. Athletes received information package about date, place, routes and schedules via email and the website.

**Problems occurred**

A direct observation of the situation unveiled several critical moments associated with timing and place. Though the surface of Harju competition arena was clear, visibility was low which cause aggravated competition conditions. Contestants were complaining that there was no space for indoor warming-up in Harju and also experienced difficulties with traveling from Hippos hall to Harju. Competitions in Harju were not following the schedule and some of those were delayed for about one hour.

### 5.2.4. Marketing

The marketing campaign for WMA carried significant challenges and risks with bringing attention to the event from participants, partners or sponsors and volunteers.

**Attracting athletes**

Managers admitted the danger associated with lack of attendance which arises from the risk of insufficient marketing, advertising and promotion. All four interviews mentioned this challenge.

> *"Of course, we were thinking if athletes are coming at all"*
>
> *"We were thinking about how we can market the event to attract at least 2500 participants"*
>
> *"Our goal was 3000 athletes, but that was a challenge, because we did not know if they want to come or not"*

Though one of the respondents noticed that over exceeding the planned amount was also a risk:

> *"I think, if there were even more athletes we would not fit them all. We did not want to attract such amount. Our budget was prepared for 2000."*

SWOT analysis prepared by the General Secretary also mentions communication risk:

*"Communication failure: that communication does not reach the intended recipients." (WMA 2012 Projektinsuunnitelma, 2012)*

WMA association considers its international members as potential participants of WMA competitions: therefore the target market for Jyvaskyla 2012 was known and consisted of male and female master athletes aged 35 – 85+. Objectives of the event mentioned above supported the marketing strategy by defining which direction to follow. Marketing was engaged through various channels - national sports journals, facebook, media, email distribution through international WMA network, website, presentation stands at other international events (Interview with Mr. Pajunen; WMA 2012 Projektinsuunnitelma) . The facebook page was assumed to attract the biggest amount of participants and minimize the risk of low attendance in general sense:

*"We started Facebook campaign in 2011 and, I think, it was the biggest asset. So many sportsmen registered after that. We had some athletes from Africa, they told me that there isn't any WMA association in their country and they found information about the championship on Facebook".*

**Attracting "right" volunteers**

As Jyvaskyla possesses the experience of holding large scale events, potential of volunteer work was tested and organizers assumed to rely heavily on the volunteer help, however due to the time of the year they were doubtful to obtain such a large amount. It was stressed in the report of Lahti meeting minutes that organizers expressed concerns about their ability to attract volunteers during these dates (WMA Lahti memo, 2009) and mentioned by the interviewees.

*"To my mind, another risk was if we were able to collect 500 volunteers. Esä and Markku claimed that there should not be a problem to get around 400 volunteers, but because we knew that there was a vocation time – Easter – and schools were closed it was a challenge"*

*" …and I think, lists of volunteers were prepared quite late, many volunteers did not come. I think, we should have prepared them in 2011 already."*

Also, the management team was concerned with receiving volunteers with sufficient international skills:

> *" JKU organized Finnish championships before and they had experience, but then they needed people who could communicate in English, French, Russian… this was a concern really"*

The project plan of the event comprised a detailed framework which allowed to successfully overcome challenges and gain 580 volunteers. Before starting the volunteer recruiting campaign, the management team conducted a research on a potential target market, motivational factors and barriers. The results revealed the biggest potential group embraced young people and proposed to contact them via educational institutions or facebook. In addition, volunteer register system ensured the simplicity of the recruiting process (WMA 2012 Projektinsuunnitelma).

**Partners**

Attention of the organizers was directed to forming partnership with local companies, which could and would express willingness to support the event.

> *"We had two goals regarding partners. One is, of course, to get support money or services and to attract companies to participate in the competition. This was a challenge"*

In order to avoid failures with finding and contacting potential sponsorship, the project plan included suggested partnership list and code of ethics while trying to get the attention of those companies. Also organizers predetermined package prices and suggested local companies which could provide services in exchange of advertizing space (WMA 2012 Projektinsuunnitelma; from interview with Mr. Pajunen).

Other common sponsorship risks as ambush marketing and overestimated influence of the partnering companies were not considered as threats.

**Attracting audience**

Finally, the lack of audience embraced the risk of partially failing one of the objectives of the event.

> *"One of our goals was to promote healthy lifestyle and, of course, we considered attracting local citizens. We thought that people might not come if competition had an entrance fee, so we decided that participation would be free*

*of charge. People were coming and buying coffee and food – we received some profit anyway".*

Additionally, decision concerning free entrance, local marketing strategy involved advertizing in local media, newspapers and transport.

**Monitoring, documentation and communication**

The marketing strategy was recorded in detail in the project plan. The numbers of registered participants and volunteers were also easily visible due to the effective registering system.

Marketing activities were constantly monitored and discussed by the local organizing committee that was especially interested in participant rates.

*"When it was autumn 2011 we had local organizing committee meeting. I asked how many people registered. So there were only about 450. I said – phone, contact – and in December 2011 there were around 650 people registered".*

### 5.2.5. Finance handling

**Major risks**

Mr. Koistinen who was responsible for the financial plans of the event stated that one major risk faced by WMA was not to cover the event costs if the attendance rate was low. This risk emerged from personal intuition of the planning committee. The risk threatened the whole performance of the event and can be considered intolerable; therefore it was transferred to the city of Jyväskylä. The city guaranteed to cover the costs in case of a negative balance in the budget.

Another challenge was associated with the results services.

*"Another risk was relating to knowledge management. Finland is a hi-tech country, so we wanted to search offers for result services in Finland. But they were extremely expensive. So someone recommended Italian company, prices were convenient and we made a contract"*

In the end, risk of unaffordable spending was avoided by mentioned alternative option.

**Other risks**

As the risk management concept appeared to be a completely unknown strategy to the financial manager, further questions concerning risks identification and handling response actions were considered improper. Therefore, the author of the research structured the interview questions over the general framework of finance management. The researcher concentrated her research around particular areas which are usually exposed to risks and were discussed in the succeeding chapter: funding, financial forecasts and budgets, pricing, expenses management, flow of the finance.

The funding base for WMA was obtained from several sources: the main ones were city funds, sponsorship money, commissions and registration fees for participants. Thus, finances were derived from multiple resources which ensured overall feasibility of the event as risk of over relying on single resource was avoided. Moreover, as was derived from the interview with Mr. Koistinen and JKU report article, organizers performed clear financial goal setting: the event was meant to bring a substantial profit for the Jyväskylä region in general and for the JKU organization.

Financial plans were formulated back in 2009 and in order to avoid inaccuracy were constantly revised (the last time the budget was updated right before the event, according to Mr. Koistinen). The financial manager repeatedly stated that the budget was rather flexible and allowed to add expense columns as necessary. Though each department had preliminary budget, limitations were not defined strictly and spending strategies were dependent on personal expertise and experience of the team members. On the other hand, the pricing policy was brainstormed and officially discussed with the WMA committee. Also, sponsorship package prices were defined already in the project plan.

Liquidity of the cash flow was supported by funds received from the city on the design stage of the event: the largest share of the revenue was generated directly before the event, during and after, however there were bills which required immediate payment. (from the interview with Mr. Koistinen)

**Monitoring, documentation, communication**

Mr. Koistinen claimed that his main responsibilities included controlling and monitoring of the finance flow which was achieved through keeping a continuous record system, approving and signing bills and revising budget.

The financial manager was keeping records of the finances (incoming and outcoming) and financial plans. Documentation regarding financial operations included preliminary budget, revised budgets, records of the financial flow in the book keeping system, payment bills, agreements with sponsors, partners. Information concerning finances was delivered to each team for the efficient planning progress (generally via meetings).

### 5.2.6. Security management

Security of the event was not considered to be a specifically risky area, and most of the preparations included standard procedures legally required by the law and local administrative authorities. The security plan was prepared by the general secretary shortly before the event.

During the interview with the general secretary and after reviewing the security plan the author could identify the following potential risks which were mentioned: fire, criminal activity, bomb threats, accidents, injuries or illnesses, power failure, riots, risks associated with alcohol consumption.

**Health**

A significant great amount of participants representing the aging population group was naturally exposed to health risks (like heart attack etc.); though the event organizer anticipated this risk, he commented:

> *"as athletes are healthier than ordinary aging people it was a tiny likelihood that such accidents could happen".*

On the other hand, safety risks associated with injures were taken into consideration rather seriously:

*"It is a spots event, of course, we expected that participants can be injured. We had a first aid center with all equipment. Also we're quiet near to the hospital, so there should not be any problems."*

**Alcohol**

Also, though alcohol is a common problem of large events, the interviewee considered this risk sharply unfeasible as "alcohol was not sold during competitions and was prohibited in the area so such problem could not be".

**Security**

Terrorist attack and bomb threats were not considered as serious risks. The general Secretary commented:

*"Of course, we have it mentioned in our security plan, but I don't think it could happen. Finland is a calm country."*

The question of fire safety was addressed thoroughly and detailed information was presented in the safety plan.

Event organizers also cared about the technical safety of the event place.

*" Of course, technical issues should be controlled at such events. Our technical manager was preparing checking equipment and arena before the event"*

**Response plans**

Response plans generally aimed to avoid potential adverse situations, minimize impact where avoidance could not be reached and provide recovery solutions for cases where proactive actions could fail. Security risks were not transferred to the third party e.g. security company.

In order to prevent most of the safety and security risks competition places were divided into functional areas. Each of these areas was patrolled by groups of security personnel from the early morning till the late evening followed by the quick site inspection upon identifying any hazards.

Plans concerning fire safety included the provision of information about fire extinguishing equipment location, fire extinguishing equipment training, action plan in case of fire and post-action plan. In order to prevent accidents, smoking was prohibited in the stands and was only allowed in designated areas.

Criminal activity was defined by unauthorized access, bomb threat and theft. In order to prevent these threats the event personnel was equipped with uniforms and identity cards. Strategically important places like offices and calling rooms were restricted zones and the stewards' responsibilities included identity check procedures and access follow-up. In case of criminal activity, security stewards were obliged to report to the security chief.

Though riots or other crowd misbehaviors had low likelihood of happening, organizers installed fencing structures and created moving paths for attendees in order to prevent disturbance and dangerous situations.

A first aid center was located near the competition arena for faster access and medical treatment.

Finally, emergency recovery plans were prepared for combating every case of threat: fire, bomb, power failure, riot. They included action plans, egress routs, emergency numbers. (WMA Turvallisuussuunnitelma, 2012)

**Monitoring**

Personnel recruited for a security stewarding consisted of volunteers who were guided and controlled by security chief. Responsibilities of the security chief included the monitoring of the security plan execution. Administrative control over the established activities was planned by the general secretary of the event. Event sites were divided into functional areas and stewarding groups were assigned for each one.

**Documentation**

The security plan document contained general event information, security liability and responsibilities, anticipated risk factors, action plans, security responsibilities, security communication plan (and contacts) and visual information (maps, routes).

**Communication**

The WMA organizing team provided necessary training for the security volunteers prior to the event. Maps of the venues were distributed to the volunteers and also were available for competition participants. Egress plans in case of emergency were visible. The safety plan was submitted to the local rescue service and the local police was warned about foreseen event risk. In addition, the local hospital was also contacted for cooperation.

### 5.2.7. Environmental risks handling

The analysis of gathered data revealed that the management team of the WMA2012 maintained explicit concerns over the environmental impacts the event could cause.

> *"Large public events always have certain impact on the environment: for example, infrastructure of the event, logistics and public service delivery are potential focus areas which can cause harm prior and during the event. In addition large audiences leave traces of excessive consumption of goods and services…"*
>
> (from WMA Ympäristösuunnitelma by Ahonen, 2012)

**Threats**

Even though the risk identification and analysis phases were formally omitted – due to the fact that risk management concept is generally unfamiliar to the management and volunteers – personal intuition and brainstorming sessions assisted in clarifying the areas which require solutions.

The city of Jyvaskyla's environmental guide presented the most comprehensive benchmarking tool. It supplied the event organizer with the knowledge over environmental responsibility, risk areas, critical factors and provided feasible recommendations on how to minimize negative impact or even avoid them.

Thus, the following risks were recognized by the management: carbon dioxide- and methane emissions which are generated throughout event production can pollute the environment, as well as large production of waste is considered to cause adverse

effects on the environment. The environmental manager also outlined the possible sources of threats (WMA Ympäristösuunnitelma by Ahonen, 2012):

- Inbound, outbound, on-site logistics of materials and food
- Transportation of participants, volunteers
- Bio-degradable products (food) and waste produced by catering
- Marketing material distribution
- Consumption of resources (e.g. water, energy)

**Response plans**

Environmental policies of Jyväskylä city oblige event organizers to control potential harm (Environmental policy of Jyvaskyla, 2012). The response actions planned by WMA2012 management towards environmental risks can be characterized as "mitigation plans".

Firstly, the mitigation framework targeted emission reduction. Some of the planned activities were directed towards raising awareness among participants and staff over eco-friendly opportunities.

> *"WMA encourages participants to move around on foot or use public transport. "*
>
> (from WMA Ympäristösuunnitelma by Ahonen, 2012)

The idea of creating awareness was supported by an active cooperation with the local bus company which provided free of charge public transportation service for the athletes and the staff members. In addition, shuttle bus connection was organized between main sites and hotels.

No major considerations were given about the logistics' emissions handling due to the fact that the event's sites were prepared for the competition needs and did not require vast build-ups. Yet, the LOC still ordered catering services from the local providers in order to reduce emissions from transportation.

Waste production rates were expected to appear rather high as project forecasts assured that at least 3000 participants were going to attend the event during the competition week. Waste was divided into several categories: paper, bio -waste and energy and materials waste and each category was addressed by the environmental plan. During the planning stage, the amount of paper waste was decided to be kept low by utilizing digital recording system: for example, registration of the participants was done through the website. In addition, advertising was partially conducted through digital channels: web services, e-mails and networks. As local producers supplied food for the catering, excessive packaging material was not required. Washable plates and cutlery were preferred to disposable ones. Organizers, also, tried to avoid bottled water encouraging use of tap water. Finally, the amount of waste sent to the landfill was expected to reduce by conducting recycling (bio, paper, glass, metal etc.). (WMA Ympäristösuunnitelma by Ahonen, 2012)

**Documentation**

The proposed response activities were further recorded into the environmental plan which served as a benchmark for the other teams (marketing, catering, transportation, communication etc.). Although the behavior of the participants can hardly be controlled and tuned towards eco-friendliness, event organizers attempted to influence their behavior through providing eco-tips on the main website.

> *"We wanted people to behave the way we planned. It is, of course, hard, but at least we tried to. We put some information about our values on the website and expected people to follow."*

**Challenges**

Mr. Pajunen mentioned that all the plans were fulfilled except for the recycling part:

> "*L&T was responsible for doing recycling, but they didn't do that in the end."*

Waste handling risk was transferred to L&T and was not properly addressed by the company. Also, WMA management team did not possess a plan B to handle recycling on their own.

### 5.2.8. Organizational teams and communication

The LOC meetings were conducted during the event preparation time. The project progress and challenges were discussed and monitored by the LOC during those meetings which served as the most important communication channel. Yet, organizing teams on the lower operational level were not communicating with each other, information was delivered from operational committee leaders.

> *"The organizing committee had 11 or 12 meetings since 2010 and the last one was held a week ago so the executive board can do the final closing. <…> Then there were three different areas: competitions, maintenance, marketing and finance. These operational teams had separated meetings. Within them there were, of course, smaller groups responsible for food, accommodation, media, volunteers, transportation etc which had their separate meetings."*

> *"Of course, we also used emails very often and phones. Very basic things."*

The General Secretary commented that communication between smaller operational teams was occasional and newsletter e-mailing system did not take place.

## 5.3. Analysis

Analysis of the research findings is formulated here into the discussion chapter. The author relies on the gathered and themed data in order to discover the risk management concept in WMA Championship organization. The comparison of the activities and assumptions of the management team to the risk management framework developed by the UK practitioners and actively practiced in the UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand as was previously mentioned in the theory chapter created a foundation for the analysis.

**Awareness and practical implication**

Interviewed managers could easily spot the risks if those caused challenges during the planning or competition itself, yet small scale risks which would not course major troubles or never happened were not addressed immediately when the author asked about the risks of the event. Apparently, interviewees drew parallels between

definitions of ‘risk’ and ‘problem’. Also, uncertainty of the elements of successful project completion created the base for their perception of risks.

Event organizers were mainly unaware of risk management strategy and therefore no officially recognized framework existed, yet the author could spot how the elements of the framework were informally intervolved into the planning process, in some cases even completely subconsciously. Thus, challenges and major potential problems were raised and discussed on the brainstorming meetings of the LOC, decisions concerning preventing or avoiding those issues were made and later they were monitored throughout the further planning and implementation of the event.

Apart from UK and Australia risk assessment and control procedures are not legally integrated in the Finnish regulations concerning event organizing (Grönberg, 2010) which may be an answer for this unawareness.

**Risk identification**

Naturally, the scope of the event required in-depth knowledge and control over certain areas from the organizers which was successfully reached by employing work breakdown structure and dividing the areas of control. Experience and knowledge of the team leaders was an important asset in preparing almost flawless project plan. Also interviewees admitted that the most of the planning decisions were brainstormed within operational working groups which allowed using shared knowledge for risk identification purposes. Finally, mentioned SWOT analysis and tested running competition routes represented other two risk identification tools. Though such a large scale championship had never been organized in Jyvaskyla before, used identification tools allowed to avoid common pitfalls without pondering risk management concept. Thus, unnoticed by management team risk identification process was integrated into the idea initiation and planning stages.

**Risks and assessment**

Assessment of the risks was performed basically only verbally and was never recorded in the project plan.

Though WMA championship was considered as a large scale event for central Finland, safety and security issues did not represent the first priority for the organizers. Key

concern of the majority of international organizers, as has been mentioned in the theoretical part, is a threat of terrorism. WMA organizers considered it as hardly feasible danger which can be explained with low public violence level in Finland. “Finland is a calm country” comment supports this assumption. Most of the mentioned in the safety plan activities were rather reactive than proactive. Perhaps, such position towards safety is predetermined again by the experience of the organizers.

In other studied areas risks were treated according to the severity they could cause. Managers concentrated on the major ones such as lack of attendance, lack of financing and inadequate scheduling.

Finally, many risks were interlinked and together could lead to catastrophic consequences. Lack of competing participants would obviously cause financial inconveniences. Inadequate competition dates, on its turn, could influence the amount of participants.

**Preventive vs. Recovery**

The preparedness of the organizers for the worst case scenarios is a core requirement. Numerous amounts of events avoid serious problems without thorough planning of prospective consequences and therefore risk management can be considered as a proactive tool. WMA Championship organizers applied preventive (mitigating) risk responses into the planning process in the most of the studied areas (safety issues concerning weather conditions, health, deliberate marketing action plan, environmental policy, etc.). They also attempted to transfer some of the addressed risks (e.g. financial insurance, waste recycling). Finally, several risks were retained as the organizers did not consider them as serious or possible (e.g. health problems, ambush marketing).

**Monitoring**

Monitoring appeared to be two-folded: main challenging areas were monitored on the upper level by LOC, whilst the responsibility to monitor less severe ones was left to individuals (e.g. security walk-through). In general, monitoring of implementation of decisions was considered as an important procedure.

**Communication**

Lack of the adjusted newsletter mailing system for the members of the organizing committee and absence of communication between smaller operational teams from different departments did not trigger serious problems, but opportunity to receive and discuss in depth various opinions upon critical moments was lost. Also communication culture was rather informal: team members were brainstorming with team leader which decisions to make.

## 5.4. Recommendations

By capitalizing on the just concluded WMA championships, in this paragraph the author provides several suggestions which can be applied in future projects.

Logical recommendation for the local event organizers obviously could be a suggestion to implement described earlier in the second chapter risk management framework with a help of a professional risk manager or at least to use this framework as a reference in future projects due to naturally limited resources. However, an event organizer must always remember not to regard defined framework as an ultimate solution.

Even though that the theoretical part of the research embodies a benchmarking tool and contains many practically applicable suggestions, the author made an effort to propose specific recommendations.

**Adaptation and integration**

Implementing risk management tools into an organizational process is a strategic decision of a higher organizational level team/ or manager. Decision making process should carry top-down attitude so that the operational team members will follow the leadership. The advantage of this lies in gathering various opinions and experiences and turning them into valuable assets. Risk management as a strategy should be implemented officially; therefore risk assessment can be delivered in a written recorded format and can be reviewed upon requirement.

**Checklists**

One of the simplest, yet functional approaches to identify and control risk environment is to use planning checklists. For example, the UK city council usually keeps and provides event checklist to organizers for legally regulated self assessment, yet in Finland such activity has not been noticed ( except for safety plans, of course). However, quick internet research discovered numerous risk checklists which represent suitable solutions for Finnish events. Appendix 2 consists several of those. Exemplary checklists basically embrace every critical area, not only safety and security.

**Review of past events**

Review of the documentation of past successful similar events can help in defining organizational risk gaps. The local organizing committee of Jyvaskyla WMA2012 did not get any documents of the previous WMA events, however project plan and budget together with feedback report could provide an ultimate benchmarking tool, at least in terms of marketing and financial issues. Sports events are constantly organized in Finland, some of them are annual which creates a great resource for common risk identification.

**Change of perspective or user journey**

Most of the plans are comprehensible and reasonable from the point of view of the organizer, so familiarity of the subject can distract objectivity of a decision. User journey is a tool which allows tracing movement of various groups of stakeholders during events to identify a full picture of challenges or risks.

**Risk analysis**

Identifying risks for a complex event can easily leave an organizer with a vast amount of potential risks. Figure 6 depicts “risk scorecard” which simplifies complex routine of risk assessment and represents a familiar tool for Finnish society.

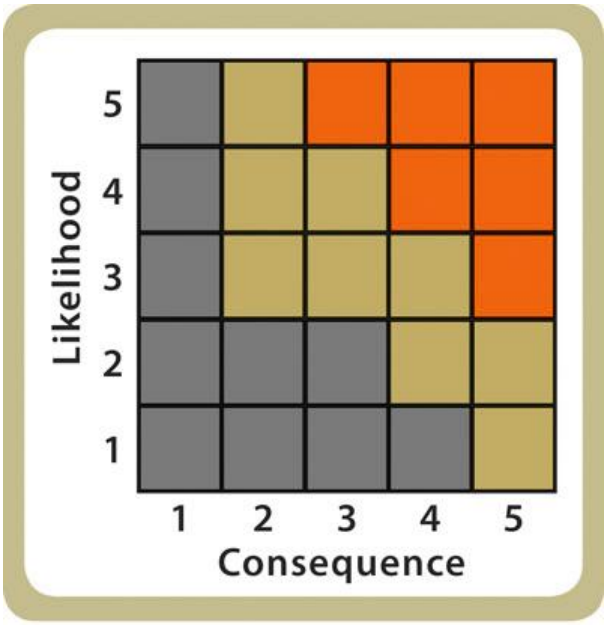


**Figure 6. Risk analysis scorecard (Kammerer, 2010)**

**Finnish weather**

Weather can be considered as one of the key risks in sports event organizing, especially outdoor or partially outdoor. Finnish weather conditions can change rather rapidly, summer is mostly wet season and snow can cover the ground until late April which can cause troubles to unprepared event planners (Climate in Finland, 2012). Apart from simply distracting outdoor events, adverse weather conditions lower visibility (snow or rain falls) and raise chance of injuries (slippery, muddy tracks, etc.). Weather cannot be controlled, but timely preparations allow avoiding undesirable consequences.

**Safety and Security**

The tendency of regarding Finland as a safe country should not “blind” event organizers. Even though small events are least likely to attract undesirable attention, crowd misbehavior can be an issue, especially if alcohol is allowed at the event.

International sports event definitely carry the risk of being attacked nowadays, so it is a primary responsibility of the host to guarantee safety: security company may be a more suitable solution for large-scale events.

**Finance**

Suggestion to utilize risk assessment procedure for the event gives an idea of extra spending, however costs of implementation of the framework will not impact the budget as much as disaster recovery expenses.

The attainment event cancelation insurance (for example, in case of natural disaster etc.) to transfer financial risks to the insurance company is a good example of covering potential, yet uncontrollable risks.

**Timely monitoring**

Monitoring of plan completion should be conducted in time, therefore Gantt charts should contain not only deadlines, but also time frames for check points. Monitoring of processes is also important during actual event in order to suppress problems or establish troubleshooting routine: a daily event report can be an asset.

**Communication**

Accurate communication is a milestone of many event planning teams, because usually decisions made within small team of operational leaders are spread later in smaller subordinate teams. It is important to establish intranet open space for sharing ideas and, which is more important, for immediate delivering of critical information. The event’s website can be used for this purpose.

# 6. CONCLUSION

## 6.1. General conclusion

The research discovered that the local organizing committee of the WMA 2012 in Jyväskylä did not use officially established framework for risk handling. Unawareness of the risks management concept did not seem to deprive the ability of the management team's members to think logically and in a strategic way. Their experience and competences shown by all the interviewees created a clearly ample base for efficient decision making and proactive planning. Risks were generally considered as challenges emerging from uncertainty and identified through brainstorming discussions and previous experience in event organizing. Assessment of risks was performed intuitively and was not recorded. The lack of ample participants that could lead to financial constraints was reasonably considered as a core risk: indeed, for self-funding events this will always be the first priority. Other smaller risks discussed within the chosen topics included adverse weather conditions, lack of partners, volunteers, unattractive location, environmental threats, invalid schedule, crimes, fire and injuries.

Most of the challenges were successfully overcome through preventive planning and careful monitoring. However, problems that occurred during the event proved that not all the areas were tackled in detail. Though the author does not claim that the implementation of an official risk management framework could completely eliminate those threats, it could definitely help to proactively identify sources of risk.

In the context of Finland, these findings signify that the risk management framework has not received distribution and proper study in this country yet. Probably the lack of a legal framework on this important aspect plays a role of a constraining factor. As other industries, for example, transportation, construction, engineering successfully utilize the concept worldwide and in Finland also, this places an emphasis on future development of the idea within event industry.

## 6.2. Suggestions for future research

This study can be considered as a pilot research of risk management practices in the Finnish event industry. The author's ambition was to study previously uncovered

areas and discuss the current state of risk handling. Due to the time limitations, amount and specialization of informants the researcher could only focus on several the most important, according to the theorists (Tarlow, 2002; Silvers, 2004, 2008; Bowdin, 2011), topics of one case. For the future researchers the author proposes to investigate and compare at least two cases of events of a different nature – sports event and music festival, for example – using the same criteria and topics.

Generating a working practical guide for managing event risks of a particular location or community, for example Jyväskylä, can be another suggestion. Cooperation with the local city council, experienced organizers and other authorities could create a basis for such research. The importance of such research is doubtless as it supports the idea of organizing almost flawless event without unforeseen dangers for participants, organizer or even the host community.

## 6.3. Closing

This research was conducted during spring and summer 2012. The author is generally satisfied with the outcomes of this study even though they revealed some unexpected results. The process of realizing this research was challenging and allowed the researcher to gain deeper understanding of event management practices. The goal of this study was to find out how operational management team handled risks associated with organizing of a big sporting events in this case, WMA Championship in Jyväskylä, Finland. For the purposes of formulating analysis criteria the author produced a comprehensive review of available literature and best practices of other countries. The results of the empirical part combined observation notes, extracts from the interviews and the working plans and later were analyzed via the benchmarking of the earlier established theoretical framework. Further the author decided to make several specific recommendations how future sports event organizers might perform risk management.

The author believes that the outcomes of this study represent an important contribution to science and can be utilized for further research. On the other hand, practical significance of the report can be evaluated by field practitioners, especially inexperienced event organizers who have not yet harnessed their own strategy towards negotiating organizational complications. The analysis part supplies

knowledge of how risks are currently managed. The recommendation part together with theory provides a tool to overcome this gap in planning. Nevertheless, experience does not eliminate chances of failure, so professionals might pay their attention to these issues as well.

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# 8. APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

**Abbreviations**

**EMA – Emergency Management Australia**

**EMBOK – Event Management Body of Knowledge**

**LOC – Local organizing committee**

**WMA - World Master Athletics**

# Appendix 2

**Interview questions**

*General questions with an interview with Mr. Mikko Pajunen:*

1. Are you familiar with risk management?
2. What risks can you anticipate (associated with WMA and your area of management)?
3. Have you done any risk assessment?
4. When did you start planning for an event? How did you create your plans, what helped you and other members of the LOC? ( brainstorming, experience, personal intuition, etc.)
5. What was the objective?
6. What was target market for an event? How did you acquire participance?
7. What was the strategy towards acquiring partnership? Audience? Volunteers?
8. What environmental risks did you anticipate? How? How those were managed?
9. What were the main safety and security risks?
10. By whom and how those were controlled?

*General questions for an interview with Mr. Markku Koistinen:*

1. Are you familiar with risk management?
2. What risks can you anticipate (associated with WMA and your area of management)?
3. Have you done any risk assessment?
4. When did you start to plan finances for the event? Based on what data?
5. Please, briefly explain your responsibility and tasks regarding finance management.
6. How was budget created? Was it revised and when? Were there any changes and why?
7. What was the financial goal? Was it fulfilled?
8. Which funding resources you were relying on?

9. What was your pricing strategy and how it was developed?
10. How expenditure was controlled?
11. Did you have a contingency financial plan to avoid deficit?
12. How did you keep records?
13. How did you keep healthy liquidity of the finance?

*General questions for an interview with Mr. Esä Kaihlajärvi:*

1. Are you familiar with risk management?
2. What risks can you anticipate (associated with WMA and your area of management)?
3. Have you done any risk assessment?
4. Please, explain your main tasks regarding planning for WMA?
5. When did you start planning your activities and how?
6. Why Jyväskylä, how the bid was supported?
7. How the progam was designed:

- Venue choice
- Route choice
- Timetables
- Dates

8. How and why did you revise your plans?

*General questions for an interview with Mr. Kalevi Olin:*

1. Are you aware of risk management?
2. What were your responsibilities as a chairman?
3. What risks can you name? (During answering this question, he also answered what was done about those risks and how it was monitored)
4. When did LOC start planning and how was its activity monitored?
5. What was the main asset in planning?

# Appendix 3

## Checklists

| Potential Risk | Check issues of concern associated with this event | Risk Management Strategy (may be a combination of all) | | | | Person Responsible | Plan To Be Completed by Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Cancel the Activity | Hazard ID and Mitigation Procedures Needed | Insurance and Contracts | Response / Contingency Plans | | |

| PLANNING AND EVENT ADMINISTRATION | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Special Events Committee in place | | | | | | | |
| Schedule meetings to assure consistent communications with all stakeholders | | | | | | | |
| Document review and verification process in place | | | | | | | |
| Safety review for each activity in place | | | | | | | |
| Vendor/Contractor risk control plan provided | | | | | | | |
| Guidelines, rules, and requirements for all providers and participants signed | | | | | | | |
| A thorough site/building survey has been completed to assure it meets criteria for the event and has no identifiable associated detracting features or hazards | | | | | | | |
| **FINANCIALS** | | | | | | | |
| Financial projections are complete and indicate event is viable | | | | | | | |
| A member of the organizing committee has been designated as responsible person for finance | | | | | | | |
| Receipt collection and accounting procedure is in place | | | | | | | |
| A mechanism is in place which keeps the City" finances separate from the organizer's finances, if different | | | | | | | |
| Bonds | | | | | | | |
| Event cancellation penalties or losses | | | | | | | |
| Security deposits | | | | | | | |
| Fees | | | | | | | |

| **PEOPLE SAFETY** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participant | | | | | | | |
| Spectator | | | | | | | |
| Lost person(s) | | | | | | | |
| Minors | | | | | | | |
| Crowd control | | | | | | | |
| Volunteers and employees | | | | | | | |

| **SITE SAFETY** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Seating | | | | | | | |
| Props and decorations | | | | | | | |
| Walking surfaces | | | | | | | |
| Lighting/visibility | | | | | | | |
| Temporary structures | | | | | | | |
| Temporary electric/utilities | | | | | | | |
| Emergency service access | | | | | | | |
| Heating and cooling | | | | | | | |
| Communications | | | | | | | |
| Sanitation | | | | | | | |
| Life safety for buildings (capacity, exits, alarms, emergency lighting) | | | | | | | |
| Fire prevention and controls-pyrotechnics, bonfires, fireplaces | | | | | | | |

| **PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Road closure | | | | | | | |
| Traffic routing | | | | | | | |
| Emergency vehicle access | | | | | | | |
| Parking | | | | | | | |
| **EMERGENCY RESPONSE** | | | | | | | |
| First aid/Medical | | | | | | | |
| Evacuation | | | | | | | |
| Earthquake | | | | | | | |
| Fire | | | | | | | |
| Violence | | | | | | | |
| **ENVIRONMENT** | | | | | | | |
| Noise and/or light pollution | | | | | | | |
| Environmental impact | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Water utilization and disposal | | | | | | | |
| Recycling | | | | | | | |
| Weather contingency | | | | | | | |
| **SECURITY** | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug management | | | | | | | |
| Fencing/Perimeter security | | | | | | | |
| Protection of money | | | | | | | |
| Entry/Admission controls | | | | | | | |
| Anti-social behavior | | | | | | | |
| Sabotage | | | | | | | |
| **VENDOR-CREATED RISK** | | | | | | | |
| Cooking (fire, hot oil, etc) | | | | | | | |
| Food safety | | | | | | | |
| Temp. structures or equipment | | | | | | | |
| Storage | | | | | | | |
| Mobility and transport | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ANIMALS** | | | | | | | |
| Pet Admission | | | | | | | |
| Exhibits | | | | | | | |
| Performances | | | | | | | |
| **ENTERTAINMENT** | | | | | | | |
| Rides | | | | | | | |
| Inflatables (e.g. jumphouses) | | | | | | | |
| Mechanical devices | | | | | | | |
| Play equipment | | | | | | | |
| Demonstrations | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **REGULATORY / LEGAL / RISK TRANSFER** | | | | | | | |
| Waivers and hold harmless | | | | | | | |
| Insurance policies | | | | | | | |
| Accessibility and special accommodations | | | | | | | |
| Permit requirements | | | | | | | |
| Application review | | | | | | | |
| Use agreements | | | | | | | |
| Contracts | | | | | | | |
| License and/or certification requirements | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New legislation pertaining to the event which must be addressed | | | | | | | |
| **REPUTATION** | | | | | | | |
| Entertainment | | | | | | | |
| Political | | | | | | | |
| Drugs and alcohol | | | | | | | |
| Vendor sales items | | | | | | | |
| Impact on property owners and neighbors | | | | | | | |

| **Venue Hire/Lease** | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| If leasing or hiring, check the Lease/Rental contract, especially for insurance requirements and for disclaimers by the lessor. | | | | |
| Insurance cover of the venue | | | | |
| Services provided by owner/manager | | | | |
| Hire of additional facilities (temp stables, marquees, tents, temp. seating, etc.) | | | | |
| Risk inspections of the site | | | | |

| **Hiring Equipment** | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| On-site vehicles Third Party insurance (golf buggies, etc.) | | | | |
| Vehicle lease/rental contract and its provisions | | | | |
| Best location for equipment in respect to refuelling, fuel leaks/spills, service access | | | | |

| **Contractors (for services/performances), Sponsor displays** | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Insurance for people doing performances/displays (if not EFA, they should have their own policy) | | | | |
| Service providers (like security firms, caterers, etc.) have provided evidence of insurance cover. | | | | |
| If event is a ticketed event, consider cash security requirements | | | | |
| Is security firm experienced and licensed? | | | | |
| Briefing of security officers on functions, rights, and responsibilities | | | | |
| Liability waivers/disclaimers | | | | |

| **Records and Documentation** | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ample supply of 'incident report' forms and disclaimers/ waivers distributed to relevant staff for issue to competitor, etc. | | | | |
| Incidence Management Procedures | | | | |
| Evacuation Procedures | | | | |
| Illness/ Injury procedures | | | | |
| Staff have been made aware of procedural requirements | | | | |
| Liability waivers | | | | |

| Food Outlets (especially when staffed by volunteers) | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contractors carry their own insurance. | | | | |
| Liquor licenses displayed. | | | | |
| Staff uniforms/clothing clean | | | | |
| Hair covered/hat or cap worn | | | | |
| Use of gloves or tongs when handling food | | | | |
| Others to handle money/coupons | | | | |

| Checks during events - "Management by walking about" | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Staff are relieved on regular basis. | | | | |
| Staff "overloads" are addressed during peak times. | | | | |
| Food area are kept clean. Spillages to be cleaned regularly | | | | |
| Crowd control - marshals required - trained personnel | | | | |
| Safety announcements over PA | | | | |
| Vehicle parking controls in place | | | | |
| Lost children procedures and facility establishment | | | | |
| Translation services (where appropriate) | | | | |
| Press/ Media reception hosts/hostesses | | | | |
| Ticketing and coupons sales staff and outlets | | | | |
| Internal Communications | | | | |
| External Communications (Inc Mobile Phones) | | | | |

| Electrical | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fuses/ circuit breakers suited to cable load capacity in leads and boards | | | | |
| Leads, cables and plugs | | | | |

| Fire Emergency Checklist | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Personnel trained in and understands his/her emergency duties | | | | |
| Personnel trained in use of extinguisher types | | | | |
| Availability of Fire Blanket for cooking areas | | | | |
| Emergency Plan current and reviewed | | | | |
| All exits clearly marked | | | | |
| Are any fixed systems on site useable (eg Fire Hoses etc) | | | | |
| If the are/arena is fenced are gate keys freely available to Emergency services/event organisers | | | | |

| Siting of Facilities, Outlets etc. | Okay/NA | Needs attention | Person Responsible | Action Completed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The siting of food outlet shall take into account the requirements for power, water and sullage. (Some mobile operations are complete with separate water and sullage tanks and can be located at will.) | | | | |
| Local Government Health regulations need to be observed. | | | | |
| Try to site food outlets on level ground adjacent in the appropriate areas, providing easy access. | | | | |
| Check for slip or trip hazards and be clearly lit at night. | | | | |